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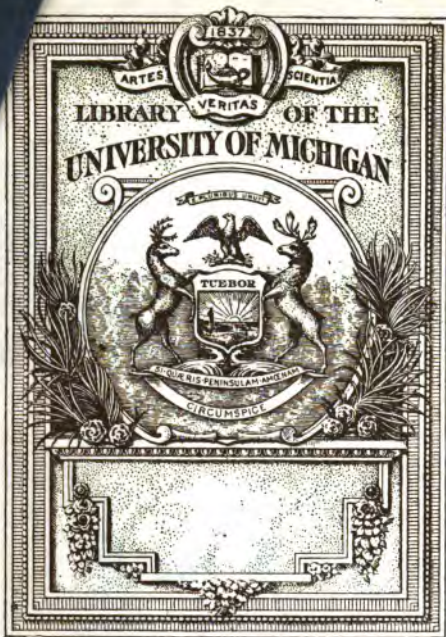
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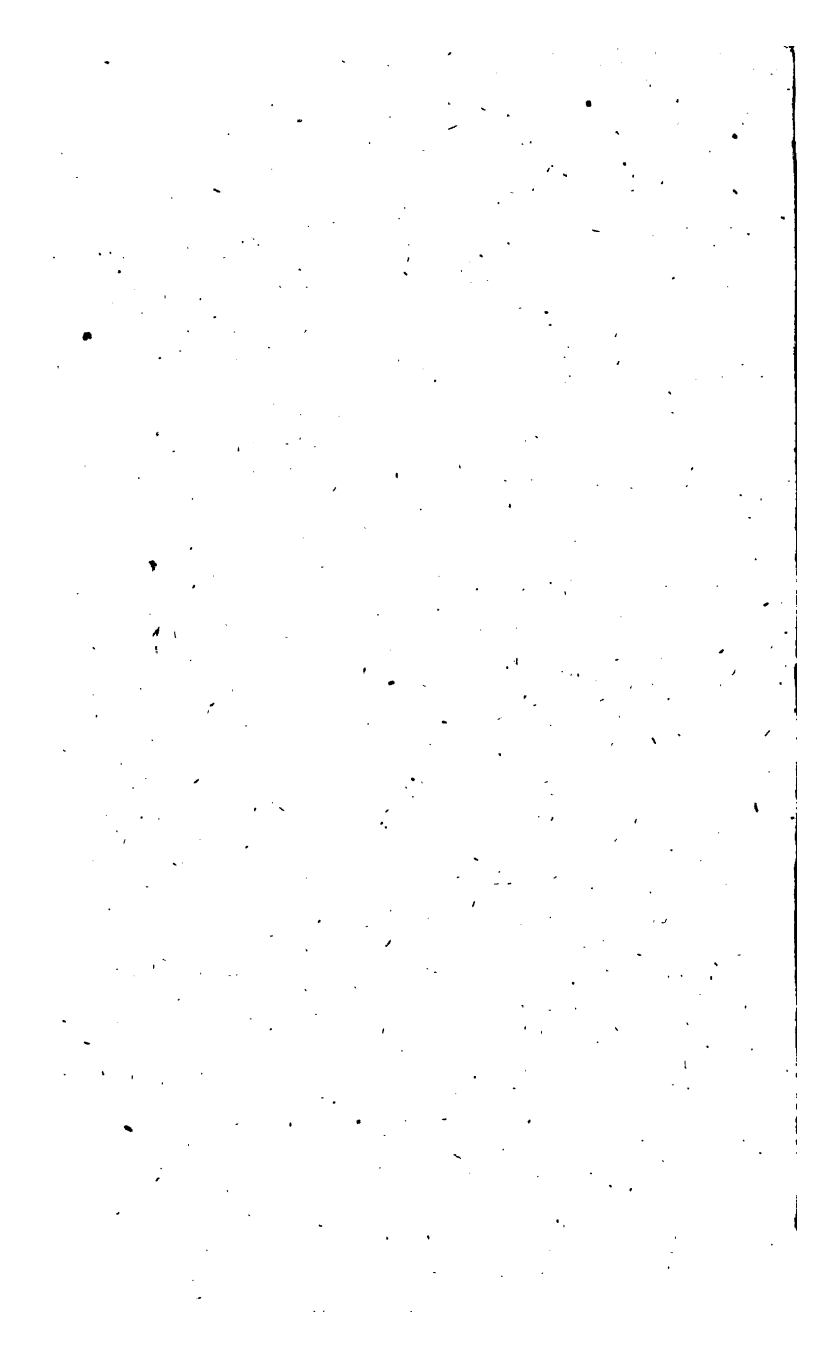


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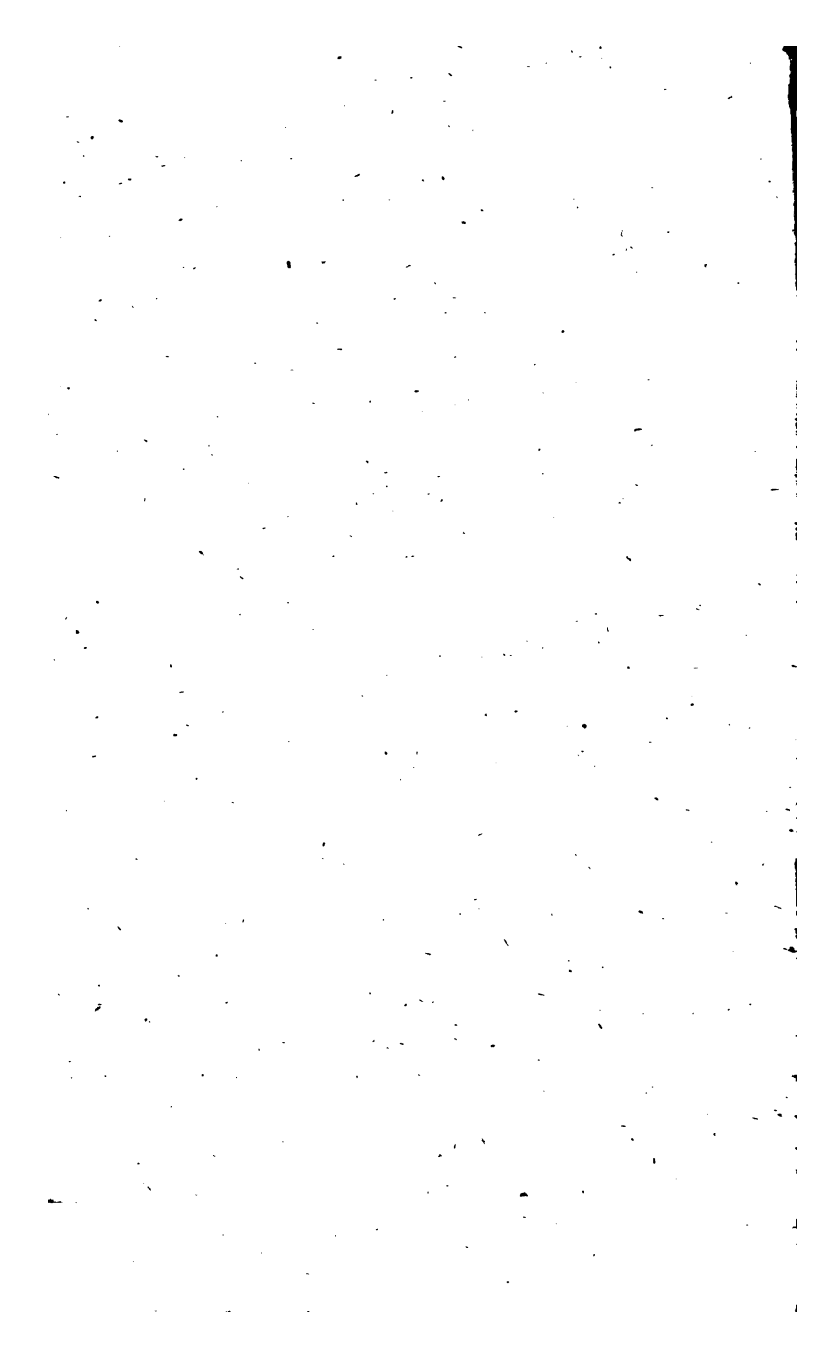
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*Dr. Johnson.*

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1801







# LETTERS

WRITTEN BY

## A TURKISH SPY,

*Who Lived Five-and-Forty Years Undiscovered at*

PARIS;

Giving an Impartial Account to the Divan at Constantinople of the most Remarkable Transactions of Europe, and discovering several Intrigues and Secrets of the Christian Courts, (especially of that of France) continued from the Year 1654 to the Year 1682.

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*Written originally in Arabic, Translated into Italian, and from thence into English.*

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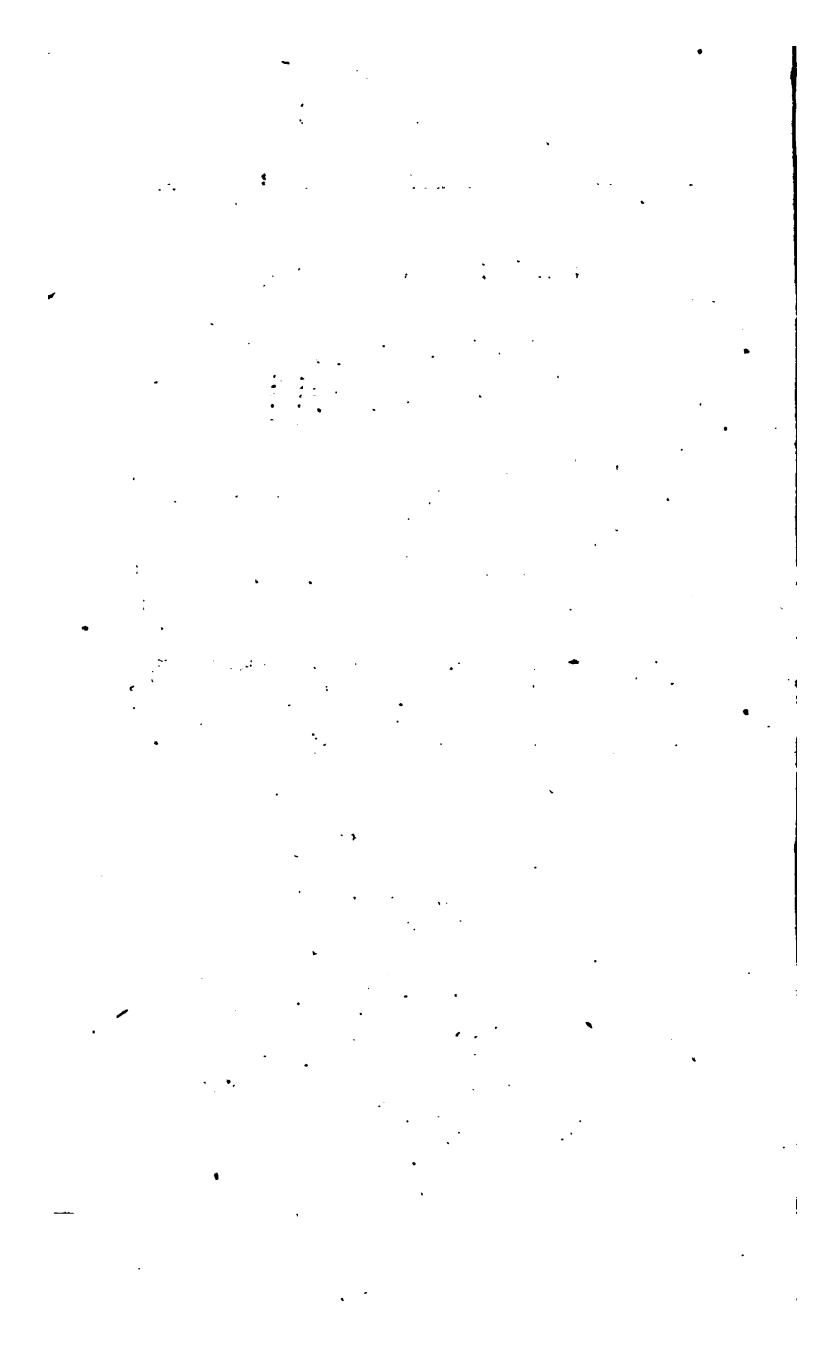
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1801.





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## TO THE READER.

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PREFACES, methinks, are so much like the printed bills pasted upon the booths in Bartholomew-Fair, to give an account of the entertainment you are to expect within, that were it not in pure compliance with custom, one would forswear writing any. But the world is humorous, and must be served according to its own fashion; every thing is damned that is not a-la-mode; and he that publishes a book, without civilly accosting the reader at the beginning, is thought to intrench upon good manners.

To prevent all these inconveniencies, it is thought fit once more to say a word or two, not in praise of this volume of letters (even let it take its fortune as the other four have done), but by way of apology for some things which may seem liable to censure.

Some perhaps will be offended at the zeal which appears in this Arabian, when he writes in honour of the Mahometan faith; others will as much wonder at his looseness and indifference, his doubtfulness of all things; for in some of his letters he appears a great sceptic, and confesses himself so.

These gentlemen ought to consider that his style and sentiments are suited to the quality of the person to whom he writes: To his intimate friends he

unbofoms himfelf with abundance of franknefs, but when he addreffes to the mufti, or other grandees of the Porte, he is cautious and referved.

It may be fuppofed that he underftood himfelf very well, or elfe he was not fit for that employment in Paris; and, without doubt, having had his education in the feraglio, as he profefles, he was no ftranger to the punctilios of addrefs ufed in the Turkifh court. It was his poliey and intereft to appear a very devout Mahometan when he wrote to the minifters of ftate; and it is poffible he was fo in reality, or at leaft perfuaded himfelf fo at certain feafons; and yet this hinders not, but he might at other times take the liberty to defcant on fome abfurdities in their doctrines and practice, when he wrote to his familiars, and was minded to converse with freedom.

If in fome points he feems to give credit to the Arabian writers, who have treated of Egypt and its antiquities, in others he fhows himfelf a man not over-fond of fables and romances.

However, let his opinions be what they will, and his fentiments never fo extravagant in matters of fpeculation and controverfy, fo long as his morals are found and good there is no occafion to be captious. We need not fear that any Chriftian, or any man of fenfe, will be profelyted by his letters, to a religion, which he himfelf, though profefling it, yet fo often doubts of and ridicules.

He fpeaks very honourably of Chrift, and impartially of Chriftians, accusing their vices rather than their doctrines, and appearing all along a moderate man in his fentiments of religion, and a friend to

virtue and reason. If he discovers some failings, in being too melancholy, consider that he was a mortal like other men. However, reader, admire his untainted loyalty, and imitate it.

You will find in this volume true history, with variety of solid remarks, and not a few secrets of Cardinal Mazarini and Oliver Cromwell uncabinetted; particularly that famous intrigue carried on by Colonel Spinteket and his confederates, to save Ostend from being surpris'd by the French in the year 1658; and to bubble two of the ablest statesmen in Europe.

After all, assure thyself that the next volume will contain more illustrious relations than any that has gone before; where you will hear of an end put to the war between France and Spain, after it had lasted five-and-twenty years; and the marriage of Lewis XIV. with the Spanish Infanta; as also of an universal peace in Christendom; the restoration of Charles II. to his crown and kingdoms, after twelve years exile in foreign countries; and twelve several revolutions of government, here at home; with many other memorable and important events and transactions in the world; as the dreadful earthquake which overturned part of the Pyrenean mountains; the more destructive plague, which swept away almost an hundred thousand people in London; and the deplorable fire, which consumed the greatest part of that famous city, in the space of three days.

You will there also find an account of the death of that great minister of state, Cardinal Mazarini; of the Duke of Orleans, uncle to the French king; of the Duchess of Savoy; of Carolus Josephus the

emperor's brother; of the Duke of Vendosme; of the queen-mother of France; and of Philip IV. King of Spain, with other persons of princely quality.

For this Arabian was careful to transmit to the Ottoman Porte intelligence of all things which were most remarkable in Europe: And that his letters might not seem tedious, he intermixed moral reflections with some maxims of policy, essays of reason, and now and then a touch of philosophy: And if we may guess at the cause of his more abounding in these kind of miscellany discourses, after the year 1659, than he did before, it seems probable that a general peace about that time being established in Europe, he had little else to write but his observations on the several states and courts of Christian princes, the different manners, customs, and laws of people, the councils and intrigues of statesmen, with such other matters as occurred worthy of notice.

If, either in this volume or in those that are to come, he seems in any of his letters to alter his opinion, and contradict his former sentiments, remember it is no more than what the greatest writers have done, who have lived to old age, as this agent did: Nobody is ignorant of St. Augustine's Retractions, and Cornelius Agrippa's Vanity of Sciences; wherein those two great authors run counter to all that they had written before; and it were easy to produce an hundred instances besides.

In a word, reader, take in good part the translator's pains, who renders things as he found them, without altering or corrupting the sense of his copy.  
Farewell.

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1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general situation and the second section deals with the progress of the work.

2. The general situation of the country is described in the first section. It is noted that the country has made considerable progress in the field of industry and commerce during the year. The production of goods has increased and the trade has expanded. The government has also taken steps to improve the living standards of the people and to develop the country's infrastructure.

3. The progress of the work is described in the second section. It is noted that the work has been carried out in accordance with the plan and that the objectives have been largely achieved. The work has been carried out in a systematic and organized manner and the results have been satisfactory.

4. The report concludes with a summary of the main findings and a list of recommendations. It is recommended that the government should continue to support the development of industry and commerce and to improve the living standards of the people. It is also recommended that the work should be carried out in a more systematic and organized manner in the future.

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# LETTERS

WRITTEN BY

## A SPY AT PARIS.

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### BOOK I.

LETTER I.—*MAHMUT the Arabian, and Vilest of the Grand Seignior's Slaves, to the Mysterious ESAD, Arbitrator of Doubtful Problems, Prince of the Mustis.*

WHEN I first came to Paris, my instructions were not so full and particular as to direct me in all emergencies. A great many things were left to my own conduct and prudence, both in civil and religious matters; so that if I have made any false steps, I hope it will be excusable, in regard it is not so much my fault as that of the ministers who reside at the August Porte. I have often addressed to them, desiring supplemental rules and cautions in some peculiar cases which I proposed; but they have been very sparing of their counsels. It is true, indeed, about five years ago, I received some particular orders from the Visier Azem, and the Kaimacham, as also from

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A

thy sanctity, wherein I was commanded to write with all freedom to the grandees. This, with the other directions, has been of great use to me: It has armed me with fresh courage, and removed the melancholy apprehensions I had of some men's revenge, whose vices I reprov'd. Praise be to God, King of the Day of Judgment, I have accused no man wrongfully; yet I was full of fears, even in the performance of my duty, knowing that mortals generally love to have their faults concealed, and pursue those with malice who discover or reprehend them. But now all my fears in that kind are vanished; yet I have scruples of another nature, which none but the infallible guide of the faithful can disperse.

Ever since I have resided here, I have been precise in observing all the precepts of our holy law, so far as consist'd with the security and success of my commission; for I have been forced to leap over many lies and false oaths to conceal myself; I have likewise done abundance of other irregular things to promote the cause. I am engag'd in; for all which thou hast vouchsafed me a dispensation. There remains one thing in which thy advice is necessary.

I have been hitherto punctual in keeping the fast of Ramezan, at the time appointed to all mussulmans, which thou knowest falls earlier by eleven days every year than it did the year before; so that in the space of four-and-thirty years it passes through all the four seasons. Now this successive variation of the great fast, causing it sometimes to fall at the very times of the most solemn festivals among the Nazarenes, such as that which they call their Christmas, which is a feast of thirteen days, I fear lest I may be taken notice of, should I, by celebrating the Ramezaan at those times, contradict the universal



practice of all the Franks, and start suspicions in those with whom I converse, to my disadvantage and ruin.

To thee, therefore, who art the wisest of the wise, I fly for counsel in this exigency, beseeching thee to dictate plainly what I am to do.

I know that the sick, or wounded, or travellers, are dispensed with, if they violate the sacred moon; at which time the gates of paradise are opened, and invisible favours are done to the devout observers of this precept; whilst the avenues of hell are barricadoed, and all the devils chained up from appearing abroad, or doing any mischief in the world. I say, I am not ignorant of the indulgence which is given to men under such circumstances, provided they satisfy the law, by keeping the fast at some other season, more agreeable to their health, or other necessities. And thus far I could have silenced the alarms of my own conscience, without molesting thee; knowing that a mussulman is always allowed this liberty in a foreign country, much more in a region of infidels.

But that which I aim at is to be informed, whether, to put the better disguise upon myself, and more efficaciously to prosecute the interest of the Grand Seignior, I may not always celebrate this fast at the precise time that the Christians keep their Lent? for then I should pass unsuspected, and no man would take me for any other than a Christian and a Catholic. Nay, my manner of daily fasting at that time, would raise me a considerable credit among the Christians that know me; they would cry me up for a saint, or a very holy man; for the fast of the Christians is a feast, in comparison with the rigorous abstinence of the mussulmans. Those indeed refrain from all sorts of flesh, but they load their tables with variety of fish and other dainties; neither have they patience to tarry for their repast beyond the mid-day; whereas the

mussulmans taste of nothing during the Ramezan, till the sun is gone down, and the stars appear ; no, not even in the parching deserts of Arabia, where men are ready to perish of thirst ; yet no man will extend his hand to the water-pot, to refresh himself in those unspeakable agonies, till the shadow of the earth is advanced into the higher region of the air, and has banished the least glimmerings of the sun. When, therefore, the Franks shall see me fast after this austere fashion in their Lent, they will say I am a very mortified man, and a devout Catholic ; for they judge altogether by the outside. So if any danger should threaten me, I should find friends among the zealots, and the indifferent would not appear my enemies ; but the wicked, whose black guilt has rendered them a terror to themselves, as well as an abomination to others, would stand in fear of me. Thus, on all hands, a way would be open for me to escape a discovery of the secrets committed to my charge.

It would be much more to my satisfaction, if I could with safety celebrate this fast in the very moon whercin the Alcoran was brought down from Heaven, as all good mussulmans generally do ; but I am taught not to betray, or so much as hazard the affairs of my great master, for a mere nicety or punctilio of religion. God is the Merciful of the Merciful, and it is his will that the empire of the true faithful should be extended wherever the moon or the sun shine on earth.

Great oracle of the mussulmans, doctor of faith and verity, it is in thy power to confirm or shake my resolution in this point ; for from thy sentence there is no appeal.

Paris, 5th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1654.

II.—*To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.*

THOU informest me, that the King of the Romans is dead, and that divers prodigies happened about the time of his expiring ; whilst others report, that the German emperor himself died the 9th of the last moon. However, I shall transmit thy advice to the Shining Porte, not trusting to the uncertain intelligence of fame.

Kings and emperors must resign up their breath as well as other mortals ; it is a tribute we all owe to Nature, who will be paid one time or other : Neither has she ever exempted any from the common lot, save Enoch, Elias, and Jesus the Son of Mary. These were holy prophets, perfect saints, and void of original sin, and therefore received an indulgence ; though those of your nation, and the Christians believe, that the last of these three died on a cross.

As for all others, they have either been dissolved by sickness, or snatched away by sudden death ; some by an invisible dart from Heaven ; others by the ruder hand of mortals like themselves ; millions by the sword and spear ; and ten millions by the swifter and more unavoidable stroke of the arrow and bullet ; whilst not a few have received their death from the very elements which supported their life : An unruly fire has crumbled some into their first atoms, and mingled their ashes with those of their houses and beds of repose ; whilst water, a contrary principle, has quenched the vital flame in others. There is but one way to enter into this life ; but the gates of death, and the invisible state, are without number ; and the greatest monarch may as well fall by the prick of a thorn as by the edge of a sword. Every time I swallow my meat, I remember the fate of him who was choaked

by a grain of pepper, and that of Anacreon the poet, who was strangled by the stone of a raisin.

Yet I am not solicitous in choosing or avoiding particular deaths, knowing that no human counsel can prevent the decrees of destiny. It rather pleases me to think (such is my ambition), that by whatsoever method I am sent to the grave, there I shall be equal to the Alexanders, Cæsars, Timurlengs, and the greatest mortals; for there is no distinction of noble and vulgar in that region of anarchy, where all ranks are levelled in the dust; as Diogenes told Alexander the Great, when the monarch, beholding that philosopher in a charnel-house, his eyes attentively fixed on the bones of the dead, which lay in heaps, asked him, What he was doing? To whom Diogenes replied, "I am looking for thy father Philip's bones, but cannot distinguish them from those of his slaves." Some such thought as this might perhaps first occasion the custom of writing epitaphs on the sepulchres of eminent persons; among which I have read some made by the entombed themselves, whilst they were on this side the grave, and for their singular fancy were thought worthy to be recorded by historians. Such as this:

**I SABBAS of MELAN, by blood a Castilian, friar and knight of Jerusalem, with a happy resurrection to my ashes. While I was alive among mortals, a little satisfied me: Now I am dead, and alone in my grave, I am content with less. I neither knew myself what I was, nor do thou inquire. Traveller, whoever thou art, if thou be pious, pray for me, and pass on. Farewell, and live mindful of death. Living, I provided this epitaph, knowing I must die.**

*The birth and life of mortals are nothing but toil and death.*

Such another was that of Heliodorus, a Moor, who

caused himself to be buried near to the Pillars of Hercules, with this inscription on his tomb :

I HELIODORUS, a mad Carthaginian, have commanded, by my last will and testament, that I should be interred here in this farthest angle of the world, to make experiment, whether any man more mad than myself, would travel thus far to visit my sepulchre.

But that which Semiramis caused to be inscribed on her tomb, was a perfect satire on the living. It was this :

I SEMIRAMUS, whilst living, never was in need of money; yet was always compassionate to the poor. Now I am dead, my grave is my treasury. If any of royal race be in want, let him open this dormitory, and he shall find a supply.

When Darius conquered Babylon, and was told of this epitaph, stung with avarice, he caused the sepulchre to be opened in his own presence; but, instead of money, they only found a tablet of brass, with these words engraven on it :

My epitaph is a riddle. This is the interpretation. I never was covetous; only such as are poor, these I pity; and have therefore provided this lesson, as a treasure for the man who for lucre shall presume to violate my tomb.

If thou wilt rob the living, forbear to plunder the dead, lest they bring thee to shame, as I have done.

Thou tellest me, that the emperor seems not to be much grieved for the death of his son, the Roman king. Perhaps his sorrow is so great that it cannot find a vent.—Violent and uncommon passions are apt to smother within the heart, whilst only smaller griefs break forth in tears.

It was a memorable saying of a certain king of Egypt, who was overcome by Cambyfes the Persian monarch, and taken captive, with all his children ; when the cruel conqueror, to sport himself in the misery of his royal prisoners, and insult over the vanquished Egyptians, first caused the daughter of the captive king to be employed in the meanest offices with the common slaves before her father's face, then his son to be bridled, and curbed like a horse, with a vast burden tied on his back ; at both which dismal spectacles, the poor Egyptian monarch shed not one tear : But when he saw one that had formerly been his servant reduced to great poverty, he wept bitterly. Cambyfes asking him the reason why he seemed so insensible of his children's calamity, and yet was touched with so tender a grief for the misfortune of a stranger ; he answered, " Son of Cyrus, the desolation of my family afflicts me with so profound a sorrow, that no tears can express it ; but my compassion to this distressed servant being not so violent, easily breaks forth in tears."

Nathan, I wish thee neither extreme joy nor grief, for they are both hurtful to the heart.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1654.

III.—*To MAHUMMED, HODGIA, Venerable Eremit of the Cave replete with Wonders.*

WHEN I contemplate thy life, so full of innocence, and void of the very shadow of vice, I am like a serpent roused from his sleep by a breeze of cooler wind, or the noise of a traveller on the road ; my soul starts, and unfolding all the drowsy curls of sensuality, stretches itself at full length ; surpris'd and ashamed of its own lethargy, it swiftly retires into any dark corner to cover itself from

the light of its own faculties, and from the brighter reflections of thy spirit which penetrate like the beams of the sun.

I do not presently curse myself, the hour of my nativity, my friends that have flattered me into an erroneous belief of my own virtue, or my enemies that have provoked me, and by various trains entangled me in the paths of vice ; such malediction only becomes the mouth of a Jew, or a libertine ; for we arrive at perfection, not by cursing the evil, but by imitating the good.

I rather bless the hour of conjunction, the influence of my better stars, and the constellations of a more propitious horoscope, the moment when I had the honour to touch the sand before thy feet with my lips in that sanctuary of holiness. Oh, thou patron of good intentions, sincere reformer of human errors, refulgent pattern of the pious, glory of the wise, most excellent of the excellent, phoenix of the age !

Praise be to God, the first and the last ; peace to the angels who stand round his throne, and to the prophets who rejoice in his presence ; an universal jubilee to all the inhabitants of Paradise ; an eternal felicity to the saint of the desert on earth, whose soul is expanded wide as the firmament.

I am ravished, and full of ecstasies, because there is not found thy equal on this side the clouds. When thou shalt be cropped from the earth, the mirror of mortals, the flower of human nature is gone ; the trees of the wilderness will lament thy death, by whose presence they flourished, and brought forth their fruit in due season ; at thy departure, the grass of the field will fade and wither, conscious that thy merits drew down the rain and dew of heaven, to render Arabia fertile in herbage.

The beasts will languish for want of pasture, and men

will bewail the dearth of the land, knowing, that the life of the just causes the ground to produce a plenteous harvest.

But no mourning will be like that of Mahmut, who can boast of thy particular friendship, and in losing thee will be as if he were deprived of the light of the sun, or the morning air, or the benefit of fire and water; for so thy favours are refreshing as the elements, without which we cannot live.

Therefore, as oft as I turn my face to the city, sanctified by the birth of our holy Prophet, I send up my vows to Heaven for thy long life; beseeching God, for the universal good of nature, to continue the man on earth, the vestment of whose soul is composed of rays darted from all the fortunate stars.

Tell me, O thou holiest of the holy ones in the East, favourite of the angels, secret friend of the Eternal, envoy extraordinary from the Omnipotent, agent incognito for the court of Heaven; tell me by what chart I shall steer my course through this life, uncertain as the sea, and tossed with as many tempests. I find in myself manifest inclinations to virtue, and whatsoever is good; yet I still mistake the methods of attaining my end. I would fain be perfectly pious, just, and wise, but know not how to compass my design. One event or other still frustrates my labour: Either a friend or any enemy, a relation or a stranger, casualties without, or my passions within, stop me in the beginning, or the midst of the glorious career, the race which cannot be run without noble agonies.

Then I take breath, and rousing myself with fresh vigours, I cheerfully address to the combat which crowns the victor with immortality: My courage is great, my resolution fixed, at the first setting out; I gain-ground on a sudden; the wheels of my chariot are for a time



like those of the sun, whose momentary advances are not perceived by mortals : but before I get half way to the meridian, some unskilful phaeton, an erroneous thought, or a giddy passion, overthrows me ; either old habits, or new temptations, hinder me from gaining the prize in the Olympics of virtue.

Thus often foiled, I retire with shame and weakness ; and, finding no redress within, I fly to thee, who art created a director of the world.

It will be an offence to make repetitions, and ask counsel again : I will henceforth endeavour to follow thy example, which is certainly the most correct rule of a religious life. But then I cannot serve the Grand Seigneur in this post. Resolve my doubts. Is it lawful for me to abandon my duty, and retire into a desert ? If not, I will erect a solitude in the midst of this populous city, and build an hermitage in my own heart. If I cannot arrive at the perfection I aim at, I will at least endeavour to be as good as I can. There is a religious dexterity, by which a man may, in the midst of worldly business, make to himself paths of innocence, and walk free from the general contagion of mortals. If I cannot perform any eminent good, I will take care to abstain from enormous evils ; neither will I commit the least without a good intention, which, I am assured by the saints, sometimes sanctifies a bad action. If I lie, or forswear myself, it shall be to serve my great master ; if I dissemble my religion, and counterfeit a Christian, I will propose to myself the greater advantage of the musliman faith : Thus some higher end shall always direct my intention and performances.

But if thou shalt tell me, after all, that this is not the way to paradise, I will forsake all worldly interest, wherein I find so many entanglements, and take up my resi-

dence in some humble cave, or cleft of a rock, or hollow of a tree, where I will spend the rest of my days in contemplating the First Essence, and all that flows from it; I will bid a final adieu to this perfidious age, to the vain generation of mortals that live in it, to whose converse I shall have reason to prefer that of the beasts, who are far more innocent, and less debauched than men. Even lions and tigers, in the utmost fury of their hunger, abstain from preying on those of their own kind: Man is the only cannibal who devours his brother, and greedily swallows down the blood of him who bears the same image as himself.

I speak not of the ancient Scythians, Massagetes, or Tartars, nor of the more modern savages in America, who stuffed their greedy paunches with human flesh: Their barbarism has crept, by transmigration, into the most civilized empires and states; and is not the less cruel because it has changed its form.

Nor do I tax the more excusable epicurism of those who ransack all the elements for dainties; whose tables are loaded with the slaughtered carcases of birds, beasts and fishes; their houses polluted with an extravagant profusion of the blood of those creatures, which the Eternal Mind formed to live, and enjoy the fruits of the earth as well as ourselves.

But I accuse the oppressors of men, those cannibals in disguise, whose very bread is mingled with the marrow of the poor, and their greater delicacies are ragoos, compounded of the blood of widows and orphans; whilst they starve and ruin whole families to support a needless grandeur, a momentary pomp, which vanishes almost as soon as it appears.

Yet these men think to pacify Heaven by building magnificent temples and oratories; by entailing their estates

to convents and hospitals; as if the Omnipotent were to be bribed, or took pleasure in gifts, which are but the fruits of robbery and injustice. Can the sacrifices of infidels be more acceptable, because they are made on altars of gold? Or even the prayers of mussulmans, in that they are breathed out in mosques built of the finest marble, crufted over with precious stones, and adorned with carpets and hangings of the richest tissues and brocades? The ancient pagans can instruct us better.

Thou wilt not think me tedious if I relate a passage which just comes into my mind, of a certain great man in Asia, who possessed vast herds of cattle, and was accustomed to make magnificent oblations to the gods. This grandee once made a pilgrimage to Delphos, famous in those days for the oracle of Apollo. He carried with him an hundred bulls, whose horns were enchafed in gold, being spurred on with extraordinary devotion, and designing to do a singular honour to the god. When he arrived at the place, puffed up with his costly presents, and the flatteries of his attendants, he boldly approached the temple, thinking no man on earth more worthy of the god's friendship than himself; demanding of the Pythoness (for so they called the woman who performed the office of priesthood there), who, among all mortals, made the most acceptable sacrifices, and departed with the greatest blessing from the oracle? (for he presumed the pre-eminence would be granted to himself;) when she answered, "That one Clearchus, of Methydrum, was the most devout and dear to the gods of all men."

Astonished above measure at this unexpected reply, the vain bigot resolved to find out this man, and learn of him what method he took to please the divinity. He hastens therefore to Methydrum; and when he first came with-

in view of it, he despised the meanness of the place, judging it impossible that one man, or all the town, could be able to present the gods with more magnificent oblations than he. Having found out Clearchus, he asked him, "What sacrifices he used to make to Apollo?" To whom Clearchus replied, "I am a poor man, and when I go to Delphos, I carry neither silver nor gold, but only a basket of fruits, the best that my farm affords, which I freely offer to the powers which govern all things, and from whom I receive whatsoever I enjoy. Moreover, I keep the appointed holy days, and my poorer neighbours go cheereful from my table. I never killed any thing; nor have I done to another that which I would not have done to myself. I pray to Jupiter every morning before the sun arises, and at night when he goes down. I keep myself and my cottage clean. In all things else I live like the beasts, that is, according to nature."

Thou wilt perceive by this, O pious *Eremit*, that simplicity and innocence are the most acceptable sacrifices to the Supremely Merciful; and that the Most High God takes no pleasure in the smoke of burnt offerings, or the pompous addresses of the great, but only in the pure flames of a devout heart, the integrity of a just man, void of deceit and guile.

Thou, illustrious *Mahummed*, art the person in whom these things are verified. May God shelter thee with his mercies to the hour of transmigration, and beyond the last flight of time.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1654.

IV.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

**T**HERE are two actions which take up all the discourse at present : One is the siege of Stenay, a strong town in Flanders, before which the French army is newly laid down ; the other is the investing of Arras by the Spaniards.

It is the presence of many illustrious personages that renders both these sieges considerable. In the French camp are present, the king, Cardinal Mazarini, and all the grandees of the court : In the Spanish are Archduke Leopold, the Prince of Conde, Francis Duke of Lorraine, with others of prime quality.

They are very vigorous on both sides in pressing and defending these two places, as if the fate of both kingdoms were now at stake. In my opinion, France runs the greatest hazard ; for, if the Spaniards should prove successful in what it is said they have resolved upon, that is the relief of Stenay ; if they should give battle, and get the victory, a way would be open for them to penetrate into the bowels of France ; and it is thought many towns in this kingdom would open their gates to them, whilst the Prince of Conde is at the head of their army, who does all things in the name of the French king : Even his rebellion itself is masqued under the specious title, “ Of taking up arms to rescue the captive king from the hands of Mazarini and his adherents :” A pretty way of seducing the people from their obedience. The Parisians, and indeed all the French, are divided into cabals and parties, some espousing the Prince of Conde’s interest, whilst others manifest an incorruptible loyalty to their sovereign. I approve the morals of the latter, yet privately rejoice at the treasons of the former, wishing

their intestine quarrels may continue till the day of the earthquake.

Eliachim the Jew follows the court, which rather ought now to be called the camp: His private affairs call him that way: from him I receive frequent advice of the most important matters in that theatre of war. He informs me, that the King of France's presence in the siege of Stenay, inspires his soldiers with more than ordinary vigour, and that he shows daily proofs of an extraordinary courage. He was one whole night on horseback, giving orders, and directing his engineers; next morning he sent a summons to the governor, who made a stout reply, being resolved to hold out to the last extremity, and therefore sallied out of the town with a party of resolute men, who killed near four thousand of the besiegers.

But, alas, these infidels are only stout whilst well fed, not knowing what it is to endure the rigours of famine, and other intolerable hardships. In all the western histories they cannot match the bravery of a garrison in the impregnable fortress of Merdin, famous in our annals for sustaining a seven years siege, where the mighty Timur-leng lay before it with his invincible army. That scourge of Heaven, to terrify the besieged, and give them an earnest of his resolution, caused all the old trees round about this place to be cut down, and young ones to be planted in far greater numbers; declaring, at the same time, "that he would not raise the siege till those trees should be mature enough to bear fruit." When that time came, he sent a present of the fruits to the governor of the garrison, as likewise of mutton, with this message, "That he took pity on so brave a man, fearing lest he should starve for want of necessaries."

As soon as the governor had received these presents,

turning to the messenger, he said, " Go tell thy master, I thank him for his present of fruits ; but for the flesh we shall have no occasion, so long as our ewes afford us milk enough to sustain the whole garrison ; and that thy master may be assured we are not in want of that, I will send him a present of cheeses made of the same." Accordingly he commanded four cheeses to be delivered to the messenger, which, when Timurleng saw, and had heard the words of the governor, he despaired of reducing that place, though he had lain before it seven years, wanting only two moons. But had he understood what sort of cheeses these were, he would no doubt have changed his resolution ; for it seems they were made of the milk of bitches, and were the very last sustenance the garison had, except the flesh itself of those unclean animals.

Believe me, sage minister, such examples of patience and fortitude are very rare ; and this was the more remarkable, in that it was the first place where that invincible general had met with a repulse.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1654.

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#### V.—To DGNET OGLOU.

THIS is the anniversary day of my nativity, which I celebrate not, as others do on such an occasion, with mirth and revelling, with music and songs ; my chamber is not perfumed with the incense of Arabia, nor with any extraordinary odours ; neither is it adorned with flowers, laurel, or the branches of green trees : I am not at the expence of costly oils, to burn in a multitude of lamps, and make joyful illuminations, as at a feast. Such pompous vanity I leave to those, who perhaps have more rea-

son to be merry in this life than the thoughtful and pensive Mahmut can find out.

On the other side, I spend not this day in extreme and fruitless mourning ; but, retaining an indifference of mind, I consecrate it to the service of my reason and contemplation, which are the only things considerable in mortal man.

From the minute that I first awaked this morning, I have been pondering on myself and human nature : I suffered my anxious thoughts to start back beyond the hour of my birth, reflecting on the imprisonment I suffered in my mother's womb, which yet I cannot in the least remember. And this is the case of all men. We know not how we came into this open world of light from that region of darkness, nor that ever we were so shut up, but as we are told by our parents ; and common experience confirms us, that this is the lot of all mortals. How then shall we be able to discover what state we were in before our conception ? Whether we were in the rank of things which have existence, or whether we were not hid in the womb of nothing ? I tell thee, this thought has filled me with great inquietudes : I am restless to know my own original ; I would fain be informed, if that which they call the soul be a substance distinct from the body, or only the finer part of matter, a quintessence of the elements : If it be distinct, as I have reason to believe, it would be a singular happiness to be satisfied where it was before united to this machine of flesh and bones, and whether that union be voluntary or forced ; for I must profess myself to be altogether in the dark as to these scrutines : sometimes I join with the Platonists, and conclude all human souls to be particles of the divine nature, beams of the eternal sun ; and that though our light be now obscured and veiled under this cloud of



earthly matter, yet we have formerly shined with an undiminished splendour, when only embodied in the clearer air, or more refined substance of the sky. Perhaps, think I, for some errors committed in that superior state, we are sent down into these bodies, as into prisons, for our punishment; then I am vexed at the fatal dulness of my memory, that retains no idea of my past condition.

At other times (for like all mortals I am subject to change) I embrace the doctrines of Pythagoras, which thou knowest are generally entertained all over the East; and believing the transmigration of souls from one living creature to another, I cannot be certain but that I have been an elephant, a camel, or a horse, or perhaps some more contemptible animal; and, for ought I know, I have undergone all the various kinds of metamorphosis that ever Ovid mentioned.

However, be it how it will, I see no grounds to make any extravagant solemnity on the account of my being born to what I am now, that is, a man; for I think we are the only spectacles of folly and misery among all the creatures of God.

We boast of arts and sciences, yet the wisest of mortals are always most sensible, that they know nothing. One man builds a stately house, a place of repose and refuge for himself and his family; another comes and pulls it down, demolishing the only standing monument of his brother's prudence, or rather of his folly, who perhaps consumed the greatest part of his estate in that costly fabric; whereas, among all his sciences, had he but learned to KNOW HIMSELF, an humble convenient cottage would have served his necessities during this short life, and so he might have avoided the stroke of envy.

I tell thee, my friend, I cannot build altars to Fortune, nor adore the external pageantry of the rich and great.

I equally hate to be flattered myself, as those are who invite their friends to solemnize their birth-day.

Yet, in thus contemning external honour, I do the greatest reverence to myself, whilst I preserve my reason free from being violated or profaned by foolish customs.

Paris, 1st of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1654.

VI.—*To the SELICTAR AGA, or Sword-Bearer to the Grand Signior.*

SOMETIMES we seem to be asleep here in this city for want of news; but of late we have been roused by post upon post, some bringing intelligence of the surrender of Stenay to the French king, others of the revolt of Barcelona from the Spaniards: But that which is of freshest date, and for which all the streets of Paris are this night illuminated with bonfires, is the relief of Arras, where the French have obtained a glorious victory. The number of the dead is not yet known, but said to be very great; and it is certain the victors have taken above seven thousand prisoners, sixty cannon, five thousand waggons, an equal number of horses, with all the plate and rich furniture of the Prince of Conde, Archduke Leopold, Francis of Lorraine, and the other grandees of the Spanish army. In fine, the French are masters of the town, and of the field, and all Flanders appears now too little to hold them.

These continual successes redound much to the establishment of Cardinal Mazarini, who now seems above the stroke of misfortune or malice. Yet no man can call himself happy till the hour of his death, which alone releases us from all human miseries.

Some days ago, I received a letter from Nathan Ben Saddi, which informs me of the death of the Roman king, and of several prodigies which were seen before, and about the time of his departure.

When he was first taken sick, there arose a violent tempest of wind, which blew down the crosses from one of their churches: After this followed a terrible earthquake, that shook the whole city, threatening to remove its foundations: Moreover, an old eagle, a domestic of the Imperial palace, and that had lived there many years, took wing the day before the king's sickness, and flew quite away: Then the bells of the Imperial chapel rung thrice of their own accord in the space of twelve hours. Thus far the Jew assures me is true. There are additional reports of strange apparitions that were seen about Vienna during the sickness of this prince; as of a funeral procession after midnight, through the courts of the palace, and of a shower of warm blood that fell at noon-day in the streets of that city. But these I have only from the mouth of common fame, which thou knowest does not always speak truth.

I desire thee, and all the ministers, to make a distinction between those passages which I ascertain, and the doubtful relations of the multitude: In these cases, men are prone to superstition, and love to be the authors of portentous news; but thou mayest believe what the Jew relates, for he never affects to be fabulous.

It would tempt one to ask, What strange hidden power produces those unusual signs? Whether we mortals are under the custody of invisible beings, who teach the elements and other creatures to utter the future events of fate; or whether all these things which appear so strange and surprising be not mere casualties, accidents of nature happening of course, and only made remarkable by their

timing? Who knows but that the voluntary ringing of bells might proceed from the motion of the tower where they hung during the earthquake? or, why need we wonder that a cross or a crescent should be blown down from the top of a high minaret by a violent tempest of wind?

These things appear to me as natural as for the rain to lodge all the corn in the fields, or for a storm to tear up trees by the roots, overturn houses, and commit a thousand other violences; neither do I perceive any thing worth admiration in the flight of the eagle; perhaps some royal caprice sprung in the head of that king of birds, which he never felt before. There is nothing of prodigy in all this, but only because it happened at such a critical juncture: Had it been at another time, nobody perhaps would have taken notice of it, any more than they do of earthquakes at Naples, which are common in that country, where the earth is very hollow, being made so by veins of continual burning sulphur: They have felt several in that kingdom within these two moons, as also at Rome; but no great hurt has been done.

Nathan informs me also, that the Venetian ambassador at Vienna has distributed great sums of money in token of his joy for the late victory that republic obtained against the musulmans. This appears to me a real prodigy, that the Ottomans, who are invincible by land, yet still come off with loss at sea.

Queen Christina of Sweden is expected here ere long: She came to Antwerp in the habit of a man, which occasions variety of censures. The French call her the learned Amazon, she being well versed in many languages and sciences; they extol her virtues and perfections, styling her the phoenix of this age. All the western Nazarenes are devout admirers of women; and one of their famous sages, whom they call Henry Cornelius Agrippa, wrote

a select treatise in praise of that sex, wherein he endeavours to prove, that they are more excellent and noble creatures than men. 'But he would find few proselytes in the East.

It is certain there have been very famous women in all ages, and it would be envy in men to deny them their due praise : Such was Dido Queen of Carthage, the Roman Lucretia, the Sybils, Theana, Pythagoras's wife, with his daughter Dama, Sappho the poetess ; with innumerable others, both of East and West, renowned for their virtue, learning, or valour in the wars : But it does not follow, that they therefore surpass men.

Let us keep the rank in which God and Nature have placed us, without being childish or effeminate ; and this is the best way to get and retain the esteem of that nice sex, who hate a clown, and despise a dotard.

Paris, 30th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1654.

VII.—*To PESTELI HALI, his Brother, Master of the Customs at Constantinople.*

THOU art he to whom I can unmask : With others I converse (like our women in Turkey) under a veil. When I write to the grandees of the Porte, it is necessary for me to dissemble many things, and to feign some that I may be credited in others, and not be suspected in all. But with thee I use no artifice or disguise ; thou hast a kind of natural right to my secret thoughts beyond the claim of a brother. I owe thee an entire confidence on the score of friendship, and I seem to wrong myself when I conceal my sentiments from thee ; for, besides the tie of blood, we were partners together in the adventures of youth, and the mutual good offices that pass between us,

fastened our affections with stronger bands than those of our birth. Nor were we so unhappy as to suffer the little youthful emulations, which are common between sons of the same mother, to stifle the more solid and generous efforts of real love : Our friendship grew up with our years, cemented by interest as well as affection, and I esteem Pesteli but myself in another figure. If thou hast the same regard to me, I am happy : Let us continue to cherish this noble passion : the least coldness or reserve now, would appear to me more hateful than a divorce, more terrible than death.

It is but reasonable, that among the many services our great master claims at our hands, we should employ some of our time and care on ourselves. We owe the Sultan much, but both he and we owe Nature more, without whose bounty and providence, we had never had the honour, nor he the profit of our being in his debt. He is more deeply engaged in Fortune's tally than we, but in the accounts of Nature we are all equal : she is the universal creditor of mankind ; we are indebted to her for all we have ; yet, methinks, nothing so much enhances our score as the ill-menage of Time, in that we still run in arrears, whilst the hasty minutes pass forward, never to be revoked ; and yet we neither lay hold on them in their flight, nor so much as imprint on any of them the least transient mark of virtue or wisdom. Thus our lives slide away without profit, till the last sand tells us, " We are bankrupts ; Nature will not trust us with a moment longer."

It is time, therefore, dear brother, for thee and me to look about us ; and since it is impossible for us to make a full payment, let us at least compound with Nature, and, getting an acquittance for what is past and irrecoverable,

let us be sure to cancel the remaining part of the score by a wise improvement of every minute.

Think not that Mahmut is persuading thee to turn dervise, or to bestow all thy time in prayers ; such rigorous devotion is not consistent with the life of a man in thy station. But permit me, dear Pesteli, to counsel thee not to build altars to Fortune, and consecrate all thy vacant hours to her service. I am told, thou art grown a great gamester, not only at the polemic traverses of chess, but also at plays of hazard : the former of the two is the most innocent, yet it is too intricate and puzzling, deserves the name of business rather than of recreation ; it commits a rape on the mind, whilst it requires as much attention and abstractedness of thought as would serve to trace out the conduct of a battle or a siege : but the latter have a far worse influence on our passions, by exciting us to immoderate desire, hope, joy, and grief, for mere trifles, the uncertain products of chance ; therefore are they forbidden by our holy prophet ; and it is not to be numbered among the commendations of a musfulman, to be dexterous at managing the cards or dice.

When thou art disposed to unbend thy mind, I would rather counsel thee to use some healthful exercise, such as may ventilate thy melancholy blood. Our fathers were wont, at such times, to divert themselves with bows and arrows, hunting, wrestling, and the like manly pastimes ; thus making their private recreations subservient to the public, whilst they sported themselves into the discipline of war, and inured their bodies to labour, even at those hours when their minds sought rest.

What though Claudius Cæsar devoted himself to gaming with dice, and wrote a book in praise of his folly ! What though Domitian the Emperor, and Theodorick, King of the Goths, spent whole nights and days in this

unprofitable play ! Thou hast not read or heard of such examples among the renowned sons of Ottoman. Our glorious sultans were never vacant to these fooleries ; and, if they had, their practice cannot justify a subject's imitation. Neither wouldst thou be so in love with gaming didst thou consider what unhappy destinies have commonly attended the votaries of Fortune ; whole estates have been squandered away at dice in a night, families ruined, and the gamester himself imprisoned in the morning ; he that yesterday was master of great possessions, and a companion for princes, by the effects of this accursed vanity, has bereaved himself of all, and is to-day become the scorn of beggars.

The Chinese are so bewitched with love of gaming, that when they have lost all their stakes they will pawn themselves, their wives and children ; which, if the fortune of the dice run against them, become all bond-slaves to the winner. Here is a dervise in this city, of the order of the Jesuits, who lately came from China : Among other learned men, I sometimes converse with him : He relates many pretty passages of that people, but one is tragical, whereof he himself was an eye witness.

He says, that in the province of Queintong, a certain nobleman who had served in the wars, and acquired great fame and honour, was envied by one of his neighbours, who likewise had been a captain, and much in favour at the court : Their emulations carried them to many ill offices, and at last to open defiance. The emperor being made sensible of the hatred that was between these two officers, and being unwilling their fury should precipitate them to the ruin of each other, became himself an arbitrator of their quarrel ; laying his commands on them to embrace and eat together, which is an assured token of reconciliation and friendship in that country. They



obeyed the will of their sovereign ; but sitting up late one night at dice, it was the captain's ill fortune to lose all he had to the nobleman : Mad at his unlucky chance, and in hopes to retrieve his loss, he sends for his wife and three young sons, whom, with himself, he pawned to the nobleman for a considerable sum of money, and falls afresh to play : But Fate was his enemy ; he lost all ;—whereupon, in despair, he stabs his wife and three children, and lastly falls on his own sword ; glorying that he and his family should thus escape a hated captivity to his old enemy.

Tell me, dear Pesteli, hadst thou seen this tragedy, would it not have made thee resolve against gaming during thy life? Assuredly, our holy prophet frowns from his paradise on those who violate his laws: He knew our passions, and which were the most dangerous ; therefore he prohibited such things as are most likely to betray us to violence, and an incurable disorder. If thou wilt acquit thyself a good mussulman, thou must not leap over these prohibitions, accounting them small and indifferent trifles. Remember the saying of the holy doctor, and leader of the mussulman armies, the chaste Osman, “ A little spark will set a whole city on fire.” And the Roman satirist has observed, “ That no man becomes wicked all at once.” Think then with thyself, it is for this reason the messenger of God has forbid gaming to the true faithful, not as a thing in itself naturally evil, but only morally so, as it is a step to the greatest vices ; for whilst we captivate ourselves to chance, we lose our authority over our passions ; we stand or fall at the uncertain cast of the dice ; we are slaves to the feeblest wishes, which, if they succeed not, we grow furious, profligate, and impious ; banishing all prudence, temperance, and justice, we become impudent, and fit for the blackest crimes.

Take not in ill part the wholesome admonition of a brother, who manifests his love in thus reproving thee without flattery. Use the same freedom when thou hearest: I am guilty of any unnecessary vice; for the public service turns some vices into virtues.

Paris, 14th of the 10th Moon, of the Year 1654.

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VIII.—*To the REIS EFFENDI, Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

I BELIEVE thou hast a mind to try my temper, to make an experiment upon me, and see whether I am proof against thy anger; else, why should Kenan Bassa's business be revived again, after it had been buried above these four years? I examine not what mighty interest thou hast in that officer, that thou afresh espouseth his old quarrel, as if it were thy own. Thy affairs are best known to thyself. But let me tell thee, it will not redound much to thy credit to be found partial. I honour thee with all the devoir that is due to a minister in thy station, and with something more; for the esteem a man has for his friend, is singular, and beyond ceremonies; but still he owes some regard to himself. Self-preservation is rooted in the centre of our nature, and few will be knowingly complaisant to their ruin. I am puzzled what to think, or how to write, thy last letter has put my mind into such a hurly-burly: A thousand imaginations, like whirlwinds, tear up my most solid thoughts by the roots: I am in as wild a condition as a man in an earthquake, leaping this way and that way, yet knows not where to fix his foot in safety.

If I persevere in calling thee friend, perhaps thou wilt accuse me of presumption; if I change my style, and sup-

pose thee under another character, ingratitude will be laid to my charge ; to vindicate my actions will be interpreted obstinacy, and to own myself in the fault will be counted weakness ; nay, all the world will call me fool, in condemning myself for things whereof I never was guilty. What shall I do in this case ? I am naturally thoughtful and melancholy ; the words that spring from resentment cleave fast to my mind, and breed a thousand inferences ; my busy apprehension extracts menaces out of the most artificial expressions ; I look on myself as marked out for a sacrifice one time or other. The will of destiny be done, early or late ; I will not go out of my road to avoid it ; since it is but ill husbandry of time, to borrow it from the ineffable joys of paradise, to multiply a few days or years of a miserable life on earth.

As for the Treasurer, and the rest of my accusers, let them know that I will persevere in doing my duty to the grand Seignior, without warping to the right hand or to the left, for fear or favour.

But if my private agency in these parts meets with rubs and checks for want of money, let the blame rest on those whose charge it is to supply me with what is necessary for a man in my station ; for henceforward Mahmut will be reproached no more for demanding his pension.

Think not it is an easy thing for a man to be always a counterfeit, and never to have his mind unbent ; to act two contrary parts at the same time ; to be true and false ; a Mussulman and servant of the Grand Seignior in reality ; a Christian and subject of France in appearance. My soul is perpetually stretched upon the rack of watchful thoughts, and busy invention, lest by some improvident word or deed, my disguise should fall off, and I appear in my naked colours.

It is but reason, therefore, that whilst this vast solitude takes up all my faculties, the care of my subsistence should rest on those who employ me. Let not the ministers of the Benign Porte be peevish at me without a cause; for I imprecate, serene grandee, that God would split my soul into ten thousand immortal splinters, if ever I betray my trust. But needless suspicion would tempt a man to treachery.

Paris, 14th of the 10th Moon, of the Year 1654.

IX.—*To the Venerable MUETL.*

THE pope has been sick for a considerable time, and it is now strongly reported he is dead. They talk of an express that is come to the chancellor of France, to certify him of it, and to consult about the next election; but this is not credited here, being only looked upon as a Roman or Spanish artifice, to sound the inclinations of this court before-hand, that so they may be able to countermince the French interest, when the pope shall really die; and it is not expected he should live long, being of a great age, and worn out with cares and sickness.

It is certain he has made his will, wherein two millions of gold are given to the treasury, founded by his predecessors, to serve the church in its extreme necessities: But it is a thousand to one, if some future pontiff, succeeding in that chair, do not, in his unerring judgment, interpret his own personal occasions, or those of his nephews, to be the extreme necessities of the church; and then, all this huge mass of wealth is infallibly gone.

He has likewise bequeathed large legacies to his sister-in-law, whom they call Donna Olympia, and to others of his relations and creatures; and it is thought this lady

will more than doubly pay herself, having the management of all his affairs. Indeed, during his reign, it may be said the whole Roman church was governed by a woman; for this prelate would never do any thing without her advice.

She was born of an obscure family, but is of a high spirit, ambitious of rule, and a person of great abilities; extremely covetous and subtle, turning and winding all events to her own profit. All preferments were at her disposal; she sold bishopricks, abbeys, and other ecclesiastical dignities, at her own rates, and to whom she pleased. In fine, whosoever had any business with the pope, made their addresses to her; by which means she has heaped together a prodigious treasure, and is esteemed the richest lady in Europe. It is thought, she would have sold even the Pope, and Rome itself, the capital seat of the Christian empire, rather than refuse a proportionate offer of gold, could she have met with a chapman to her mind. This would have been a merchandise fit for the Grand Seignior, were it not reserved as a prize for the victorious arms destined to conquer all things.

The French seem mightily concerned for the tragedies acted in Poland by the Muscovites. It is affirmed, that they have taken the town of Vitebsko by storm, putting men, women, and children to the sword, with divers other cities, and places of strength, and that they have laid in ashes all the towns and villages round about Smolensko; so that there is nothing to be seen but ruin and desolation for above an hundred miles round that city, which also is now closely besieged by the forces of the Czar. If these Northern infidels go on, and make such bloody work wherever they come, they will in a short time over-run and dispeople all Europe. But it is to be hoped the Tartars, who are lately entered into a league with Poland,

will put a stop to the cruel victories of the Muscovites, and chastise the treason of the Cossacks, who join with them, contrary to their faith given to the King of Poland.

They say, four grandees of Tartary are arrived as hostages at Warsaw, and as many lords of Poland are sent on the same errand to the court of the Cham; who, as a farther evidence of his integrity, has released all the Polish captives in his dominions, and sent the ambassadors of the Cossacks home, without their noses and ears, as a mark of his irreconcilable indignation at their infidelity.

In the mean while, I am extremely afflicted to hear of our continual losses by sea: They say here, that above six thousand mussulmans were killed in the late fight in the Hellespont, and that we have lost sixteen galleys, besides ships of war. That element, one would conclude, is fatal to the Ottoman empire. Neither have we had much better success by land this campaign; yet Chusaein, the Vizier Azem, and general in Candia, has performed very heroic things. To speak impartially, and give due honour to our enemies, the Malteses, Venetians, and French, have not been wanting in any point of bravery; which also redounds to the greater honour of the mussulmans, in that they draw their sword against the flower of Christendom, and not against owls and pigmies; such are the Persians, when we encounter them; for either they dare not endure the lustre, and stand the brunt of our invincible arms, or if they do, they sink under the first shock.

When I name those heretics, I spit on the ground in detestation of their errors, for they are worse than the Zindicks and Giafers. I have more charity for a Christian or a Jew than I have for those vermin of the land. In fine, I wish they were extirpated from the earth; and that they may after this life be either metamorphosed in-

to hogs, which creature thou knowest is an abomination to all good men and angels (and they already resemble it in their uncleanness), or else that they may become the asses of the Jews in hell, to carry their burdens for a thousand ages.

Paris, 17th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1654.

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X.—*To PESTELI-HALI, his Brother, Master of the Grand Seignior's Customs.*

THE God of our fathers grant thee as much joy every minute of thy life, as I feel at this instant. Wilt thou know the occasion of this unusual transport? I can hardly believe myself, when I tell thee of an adventure the most surprising that ever happened to me since my arrival in this city; and perhaps thou wilt think I romance in relating it; but assure thyself, that of a truth *Oucomiche*, our mother, is at this time in Paris, with our cousin *Isouf*.

May a thousand soft passions thrill thy heart, when thou readest this news, as they did mine, when at my chamber door I first saw, and knew the face of her that bore me, after I had given her over for dead long ago; for I had heard no tidings of her these eleven years. Good God! so strange and unexpected a sight had almost dismantled my senses, those out-works of the soul: For a while I stood still, astonished and trembling with ecstacy. I was not presently satisfied, whether I beheld a mortal, or the ghost of one; for they say, these appear in the same forms as they bore when alive. Neither age nor travel, with all the other infirmities and crosses of human life, had so altered her complexion, but that I easily discerned the manifest features, lineaments, and air of my

mother. I concluded therefore, it must be she, or her apparition, if there be any such things.

These were my first thoughts, in that waking trance ; but her voice and address soon put me out of doubt, when, impatient to see me stand like one thunderstruck, she ran to me with open arms, and tears of joy in her eyes, crying out, with a tone and affection peculiar to women, " Art thou alive, my son Mahmut ? Do these eyes see thee, or am I in a dream ?"

For my part, I was as much upon the rapture as she, and hardly knew how to deport myself, or what to say or do ; yet the fear I was in, lest somebody in the house should overhear us, and make ill consequences of this passionate interview, taught me a lesson of moderation and prudence ; wherefore I beckoned to her to suppress her passion, and converse by signs, as the custom is at the Mysterious Porte. Those silent expressions of our mutual love, joy, and admiration, were not less significant, because not clothed in words. Thou knowest there is eloquence enough in this mute language ; and I was jealous of words, lest some inquisitive soul might understand us, though we conversed in Arabick.

After our first endearments and tenderesses were over, in which my cousin Isouf also had his share (for we were all reciprocally overjoyed to see one another in this nest of infidels), I began to consult the safety of us all three, in providing convenient lodgings for my mother and kinsman. In order to this, we made a visit to Eliachim the Jew, who entertained us at a banquet, after the fashion of the East. We advised with that honest Hebrew about our affairs, I having made frequent and sufficient proof of his fidelity and friendship. In fine, he took them both into his own house, under the notion of Greeks, his acquaintance, judging this the securest way to prevent any



discovery, or even the least suspicion of our circumstances. They have continued there these five days, and their character has not been questioned by any. I visit them daily, and we pass away many hours in recounting the different adventures of our lives, in discoursing of our friends in Arabia, Greece, and other parts of the world, and in concerting the best methods to serve one another, till death shall divide us from ourselves, as well as from our friends, and rank us in the list of invisible beings, whose state and qualities we know not.

Well, but all this while I believe thou art impatient to know what motive of their own, or turn of fortune, drove them into so remote a region as France, a country inhabited by none but infidels. Shall I tell thee in a word? It was love on her part, and the desire of novelty on his.

Our kinsman Ifouf, from his childhood, felt powerful inclinations to travel, which increased with his years, and were much heightened by his converse with Greeks, Armenians, Franks, and some mussulmans at Constantinople, who had seen many foreign countries both in the East and West.

The relations they made of the curiosities they had seen, and of their own adventures, fired his youthful blood, and he formed a resolution to depart with the first convenience from Constantinople, and visit all the regions in the world, if his life and health would hold out. I formerly acquainted thee, that he had surveyed the greatest part of Asia; since which he set forth again, and having finished his travels in that quarter of the world, he bent his course for Afric, where he visited Egypt, Barbary, the Empire of Morocco and Fez, with that of the Ethiopians, and many other regions under the Torrid Zone, too tedious for me at this time to mention particularly, because I write in haste. Hereafter I shall give thee a

more ample account of his observations, &c. wherein thou wilt find, that Ifouf has not altogether loft his time.

At length, having fatisfied himfelf with whatfoever he thought worthy to be feen and known in that fouthern track, he parted from Fez, with a defign to fee Europe. Some bills of exchange caufed him to take Grand Cairo in his way, where he encountered my mother: She perceiving that he would take fhipping directly for France, refolved to lay hold on fo favourable an opportunity of fecing me once more before fhe died; wherefore, imparting her defign to him, Ifouf offered her his utmoft fervice; and, having fettled her affairs at Cairo, and packed up her money, jewels, and other neceffaries, they took the road of Scanderoon, where they foon arrived; and putting themfelves into the habit of Greeks, Ifouf alfo fpeaking pretty well that language, and the Lingua Franca, they bargained with the mafter of a veffel then lying in the harbour, and bound for Marfeilles. He took them on board, and under the protection and favour of Heaven, they arrived fafe at Marfeilles, and are now in this city.

Yet amidft all the pleasure I conceive in the prefence of fo near a relation as a mother, I am not without fome qualms of fear, left fome unfortunate occurrence fhould difcover her to be no Christian; for then the iffue might prove dangerous both to her and me.

As for Ifouf, he defigns to tarry no longer in Paris, than to inform himfelf of what is moft remarkable in this city, and to fatisfy the other ends of a traveller. From hence, after he has vifited the chiefeft cities in France, he talks of travelling into Flanders, Holland, Germany, Swedeland, and the other kingdoms of Europe; but for Spain or Portugal he has no thoughts, either out of fear of the Inquifition, which is very fevere in thofe countries, or out of an averfion for the people, who expelled the

Moors, of which he relates very tragical stories, which they told him during his residence at Morocco and Fez. In a word, he gives this character of a Spaniard, "That he is a mongrel, between a man and a devil." He likes the company of the French, in regard they converse with a natural and unreserved freedom, which becomes them very well; but he has spoke with none but travellers yet, who have been otherways employed than in studying the artificial disguises of courtiers. If he sojourns the space of three moons in this kingdom, he will find some of the French as affected in their way as other people; he will encounter with a new sort of Frenchmen in every province; for France is a mere gallimaufry, made up of the fragments and remnants of other nations. They differ also in their language, as well as in their manners, one from another; so that the inhabitants of Gascoigne and Bretagne can hardly be understood by those of Paris and Blois, with the adjacent parts. These Western people are not curious in preserving the dialect of their fathers, but every age introduces a change in their speech; neither are they diligent in retaining their genealogies; whereas in the East, thou knowest, the languages remain uncorrupted, the same now as they were two thousand years ago, or from the confusion of Babel; the same care we Arabians have, of our tribes and families.

Son of my mother, when thou readest the two enclosed, and shalt see the very handwriting of the dear Oucomiche, and of Isouf our kinsman, let thy heart be like the valley of Admoim, fragrant as a grove of spices; for then thy eyes will convince thee that what I write is truth.

Paris, 22d of the 15th Moon, of the Year 1654.

XI.—*To ADONAI, a Jew, Prisoner in the Tower of Nona, at Rome.*

THIS comes to thee by the hand of a trusty friend : Give entire credence to his instructions. To say I am sorry to hear of thy misfortune, would but faintly express my passion : It is not easily described in words : I am as melancholy as an antelope, when the sun is in conjunction with Saturn. This is a sad sort of a beast, that will neither eat, drink, nor sleep, during that dull aspect.

In God's name, how camest thou to be so free with thy tongue among the Romans? or what tempted thee to meddle with their religion and laws? Was it not enough, that thou and all the Jews in that city had liberty to frequent your synagogues, and there curse the Christians in antiquated Hebrew? Must you needs rail at them in plain Italian too, and that over your cups, when men ought to be good-natured to all the world? Of what import is it to you whether they be idolators or no, so long as they give you leave to adore one God, Creator of the world? Or what signifies it if they are guilty of ten thousand injustices and follies among themselves, whilst you live quietly under their protection and government? Adonai, I am ashamed of the immorality of those of thy nation; I blush for your ingratitude, pride, and malice. Surely, if the Nazarenes did really believe what they profess, they would sacrifice you all to the ghost of their Messiah, whom they say you crucified: they would not leave a Jew living in Christendom, but do their utmost to exterminate you from the earth. I speak not this as my wish, but only to upbraid your impertinence and vanity, in thus foolishly provoking those, with whose permission it is that you live and enjoy the elements.

The prophet Moses, your lawgiver, left you another rule, a lesson of civility, when he said, "Ye shall not blaspheme the gods of the people." Had thou and thy companions obeyed this precept, ye might have been at liberty; but, it is bad falling into the hands of the Inquisition. However, I am glad to hear that you are not transported to the Castle of St. Angelo; that would have been a tragical remove at this juncture. But now, as I am informed, not one of you is in danger; for they say, that all the prisoners in Rome are by custom released upon the death of the pope, except those who are in that fatal fortress; and it is generally supposed, the good old Caliph is no long-lived man; for they never used to remove the prisoners designed for death, till the physicians are past all hopes of the holy father's life.

However, in regard there is no certainty in human affairs, but a perpetual change and circulation of events, lest some unhappy turn of fortune should either now continue thy restraint, or hereafter bereave thee of thy liberty, I send thee here enclosed a receipt of a chymical liquor, which may be of some service to thee in the strongest prison on earth. It was revealed to me by my mother, who learned it of an Egyptian artist at Cairo. Despise it not, because it comes from a woman's hand; for I have made an experiment of it, and find it effectual. It will render iron as brittle as glass; it is more powerful than the water of the river Styx, which no vessel could hold, but the hoof of a mule. After an hour's application, thou mayest make the thickest bars, chains, and bolts, fly in a thousand pieces, as if they were made of porcelain.

Thou wilt not wonder at this, when thou considerest the innumerable strange inventions of men prying into the secrets of nature, and fortunate in their searches.

Above all, chymistry has brought to light the greatest prodigies of art and knowledge. This mysterious science was the peculiar boast of the primitive Egyptians, from whom all other nations learned it. And had not Moses himself been instructed from his youth in all the learning of Egypt, perhaps he would have been at a loss when he calcined the golden calf, and gave the dust to the Israelites to be mixed in their drink, as the only expiation of their idolatry. Doubtless, this secret, among others, was transmitted down to those times, from Philemon the good priest, who was in the number of them who escaped the flood in Noah's ark, and whose grandson Mafar was the first king in Egypt after the deluge.

Philemon, the better to establish the state of his offspring, revealed to them many hidden things; taught them the hieroglyphics of the Dgebel Pharan, or the pyramids, with all the mysteries of the talismans, and the chymical preparations of Moncatam, the forcible waters and essences, powders and other ingredients, by which they made marble as pliable as wax or clay. These things he had learned of those who perished in the flood: He retained the wisdom of the ancients, his coevals and predecessors; leaving the rudiments of so profound a knowledge to his posterity, as an invaluable treasure, of which they could never be robbed. Thus science became hereditary to the Coptites, who bear that name from Coptim, the son of Mafar, the first King of Egypt, since the rainbow appeared in the clouds; and it was from one of that race my mother learned that admirable secret.

Trust not to words, but try the experiment. The receipt will give thee all necessary directions: Yet I counsel thee not to be big with it, like him, who, having found out the art of making glass malleable, or fit to be beat by the hammer into any shape or figure, as the silver-

smiths work their metal, must needs go and discover his secret to the prince, expecting a great reward, when, on the contrary, he lost his head on the spot; the prince thinking it great injustice, that so many thousand people as got their bread by making of common glasses, should be all ruined, to promote one man's profit and advantage.

In fine, use this secret to serve thyself, or the cause thou art engaged in; but trust it not to another, unless on the same equal terms as I commit it to thee, wherein the greater hazard is thine in divulging it.

Paris, 15th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1655.

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XII.—*To MEHEMET, once an Eunuch Page in the Seraglio, but now an Exile in Egypt, at Grand Cairo.*

WHEN I first heard of thy banishment from the Imperial Palace and city, think not that I was sad, or entertained the usual sentiments of a friend, on such occasions. No, I tell thee on the contrary, I rejoiced (yet not with the joy of an enemy) at that seeming misfortune, as knowing it has delivered thee from a real one, in which, according to my presages, all the attendants of thy mistress, the old queen, were soon after involved.

Thou art obliged to Bacchus for that fortunate calamity, which, though it for a while eclipsed thy honour, yet was the only means to save thy life.

When I formerly sent thee an account of my imprisonment here, and how I was regaled by my keeper at a banquet of wine; when in that letter I played the advocate for the juice of the grape, I little thought that thou wouldst ever make an experiment of that bugbear liquor; though I know it is common, even in the seraglio, to drink wine privately, and chase away melancholy, the

constant familiar of restraint and servitude, with generous computations.

I am no stranger to the counterfeit sickness of those, who, for the sake of this stolen mirth, put themselves into the infirmary, that they may there carouse with freedom, and drink healths to the Grand Seignior without suspicion.

Were it not for the convenient situation of that apartment, and the favour of the Bostangis, no wine could find admittance into the seraglio, save what is for the Grand Seignior's use. But now his slaves drink it as merrily as he; and I am not sorry that thou art one of the number. It is a groundless superstition to refuse the gift of divine liberality, and deny ourselves the use of that plant, which was made to cheer the hearts of mortals. Nay, our holy traditions themselves, and all our doctors tacitly own, that the vine is allowable, in that it was saved among the rest of the vegetables by Noah in the ark; and that holy prophet cursed the devil for stealing it away. Perhaps the story will not be unpleasant to thee.

When God commanded Noah with his companions, to descend out of the ark in peace, they built them houses, and began to exercise husbandry; they sowed corn, and the seeds of other vegetables; they planted also all sorts of trees; but when they came to look for the vine, it could not be found: Then it was told Noah by the angel, that the devil had stolen it away, as having some right to it; wherefore Noah cited the devil to appear before the angel, in the name of God, to answer his theft. The angel gave judgment, that the vine should be divided between them into three parts, whereof the devil should have two, and Noah one; to which both parties consented; whereby it is evident, that man has some share in the juice of the grape; for this was the decision of Gabriel;



that when two-thirds of the liquor of this fruit should be evaporated away in boiling over the fire, the remainder should be lawful for Noah and his posterity to drink ; and thou knowest, we mussulmans generally obey this law in preparing our wine.

Let the devil, therefore, in the name of God, have his share in this tempting fruit, and then there can be no injustice in enjoying our own part ; for when that which inebriates, is separated by fire from the rest, this liquor becomes pure, holy, and blessed. This is the sentence of the ancients, the immediate auditors of the messenger of God, as is to be seen in the manuscripts they left behind them, which, though they are rare and difficult to be met with, yet such as diligently seek wisdom shall not lose their labour. Abu Beere Eb'n Mahumet, has taken great pains to collect the memoirs of antiquity ; he was a learned doctor among my countrymen of the house of Sulpha (may he rest under the umbrellas of paradise) ; from him I had this relation.

But tell me, my dear Mehemet, if thou knowest, how camest thou to be the only man that had the good fortune to be sentenced to this happy disgrace ? Or, if thou art ignorant, I will tell thee ; for it seems the rest of thy company in that night's revel were discovered as well as thou, yet escaped all censure. It looks as if they were designedly reserved for victims, to a more inexorable revenge ; and the event justifies this conjecture, since within the circuit of the moon, not only they, but all the surviving creatures of the Sultana Kiosem, were strangled.

Therefore again I pronounce thee happy, and doubly blessed in being an exile, since thereby thou hast escaped the hands of the executioner, and art now living in Egypt, the most fortunate region on earth. Ascribe this to thy propitious destiny, and to the favour of Solyman Kyzlir

Aga, who, foreseeing the slaughter that would be made of that old Queen's servants, took this opportunity to accuse thee to the Grand Seignior, that so he might save thy life ; for it was at his intercession thou wert banished into this happy province, which is called the nurse of all nations. Improve thy exile to the best advantage, and from this nurse, suck the milk of science with which she has formerly nourished the whole earth. Be grateful also to thy deliverer, for he is a trusty friend, and unchangeable where he once places his affection. He had a particular kindness for thee ; from him I received the news of thy escape, for that is the proper name of thy banishment. Pour forth devout orisons for his health and happiness, since thou art in a land where the prayers of mussulmans are as effectually heard, at some particular places, as if they were uttered at the tomb of the prophet.

I counsel thee to visit the prison of Joseph, which is in the dungeon of the Castle of Cairo. This is a place of great devotion among the faithful, and has been so in all ages, since the death of that patriarch. Moses the prophet, of whom it is said, that he died in the embraces of God, made his prayers in this place ; and so did Aaron his brother, when they performed those miracles in Egypt. Jesus the son of Mary visited this place, both he and his mother, on whom are centered the smiles of the Creator ; they there performed their devotions, when they fled from the persecution of Herod. So did the prophets and apostles, as many as were in Egypt, with all true believers ; nay, some of the infidels themselves having heard of the renown of this sanctuary, made their addresses to Heaven there, in time of great distress ; for here prayers are infallibly heard, especially if they be said after the sun has traversed the meridian, when the wicked

dæmons are asleep, who walk abroad till noon, doing all the mischief they can.

My friend, when I think of the region where thou art; I can hardly forbear envying thee. It is a land of prodigies and miracles; it is the support of men, and the granary of the world: Those who inhabit it, are full of complacency and joy; and those who abandon it, burn with a perpetual desire to return. Its rivers are clear, and the waters sweet and rich as wine; the eye of God is upon it, who causes the Nile to flow at its accustomed season; whence the land is made fertile, beyond all the provinces on earth: This Nile is one of the rivers which God caused to descend from the springs of paradise, on the wings of Gabriel, and has hid the place of its descent among the inaccessible heights of mountains.

There are many strange things related of the land of Alphiom, and how it was first manured by Joseph, being before his time but a fen or marsh. The story also of Hagar, the mother of all the Ismaelites, is not unpleasant; thou wilt find it in the Chronicles of Egypt; for she was an Egyptian, of the family of the Coptites, and was bestowed on Sarah, the wife of our father Ibrahim, by Charoba, the King of Egypt's daughter. After she was dismissed from her lady, she travelled to Mecca; from whence she sent a dispatch to the King of Egypt, to acquaint him with her affairs, and with the birth of her son Ismael, imploring his assistance, in regard she was in a land barren of all things. Then the King of Egypt caused a canal to be cut from the Nile, at the foot of the Eastern mountains of Egypt, to the Red Sea, and sent vessels, laden with corn, fruits, and all manner of necessary provisions, to Hagar.

If thou addressest to the feet of the doctors, the venerable prelates of Cairo, they will inform thee of more

strange things than these. It is a noble exercise, to contemplate the kingdom of the heavens, and the earth, to search into their wonders and prodigies, to trace the footsteps of ancient nations, and the traditions which know no origin.

Mehemet, I am an exile as well as thou : Let us continue our former friendship in this state, and do one another all the good offices we can. As for the misfortunes of human life, let us bear them with an equal mind ; for they will soon have an end, as well as we ourselves.

May God, who in the time of Gog and Magog took up from the earth the great Alcoran, and the sheets of science, the black stone, and the shrine of Moses, with the five rivers, have thee in his holy protection and custody, at the hour of evil, and at all times.

Paris, 26th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1655.

### XIII.—*To KERKER HASSAN, Bassa.*

THOU mayest report it to the Divan for a certain truth, that the chief mufti of the Christians is dead, which puts all the courts in Europe upon new strains of policy.

He was called Innocent X. after his assumption to the papacy ; for his true name was Pamphilio ; but some say it has been a custom for the popes to change their names, ever since a certain priest was lifted to that dignity, who was called Bocca de Porco, or Hog's Face. He, ashamed of this ignominious name, as soon as he sat in the chair of Peter, assumed the name of Sergius. Yet all his successors have not observed that rule.

These popes have an authority greater than our principal mufti ; for they are obeyed by kings and emperors ; and being esteemed little less than gods on earth, they

are solemnly adored on the day of their coronation, by all the cardinals, princes, prelates, and foreign ambassadors at that time in Rome; and for that end they are seated on the altar, which the Nazarenes call the tabernacle and habitation of their God.

If I mistake not in my observation, these Roman caliphs aspire at a sovereignty over all kings and princes: They would make that which they call the hierarchy, a superlative independent monarchy, to which all the governments in the world should pay homage, and be subject.

This puts me in mind of a certain preacher at Naples, who, some years ago, when Adonai the Jew was in that city, and happened to be present in the church, having made a very elaborate speech to persuade the people that the priests were superior to kings, at length he broke out into this passionate exclamation: "O ye Princes of Christendom, ye are Pharoahs, and we priests are your gods. O ye Pharoahs obey your gods. Ye can only command the creature, but we make the Creator himself come down on the altars at our pleasure." This relation I had from the Jew, in his travels through Italy; and it is asserted by some of their doctors, that the pope has not only power to excommunicate the greatest prince on earth, but also to pull a saint out of paradise, and send him to hell.

If they could persuade the Nazarene princes and people to believe they have such an exorbitant power, perhaps in time they might reduce them to as blind a superstition as the ancient kings of Egypt were guilty of, who were so besotted to their priests, that when he whom they called the cater, or master of the celestial influences, commanded the king to kill himself, for that it was the will of Heaven, the poor bigotted monarch durst not dispute

the orders he had received, but in simple obedience became his own murderer.

Those Egyptian priests indeed were masters of great science, profound astrologers, excellent mathematicians, and perfectly skilled in the secrets of natural magic. They performed things transcending the more common and obvious works of nature, by which it was easy to strike a terror into the hearts of ignorant mortals. But as for these Nazarene priests, all that they can boast of is, that they have read the histories of former times, and are able to discourse in philosophy, and other sciences, without having the power to work any prodigies; unless thou wilt count it one, to keep so many warlike nations in a fervile awe of their authority, with the bare pretence of turning a piece of bread into a god.

Yet for all this, there are many poor prelates, and other ecclesiastics, who are invested with empty titles, having little or no revenues; among which the poverty of some is so remarkable as to become a proverb. Thus, it is common in the mouths of the Romans to say, "The Pope's mule fares better than the Bishop of Orvietto."

Illustrious Bassa, live thou in the faith of a mussulman, and the favour of the Grand Seignior; for in that state thou mayest despise the greatest of these ecclesiastic infidels.

Paris, 13th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1655.

XIV.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

**I** BELIEVE the secretary of the Nazarene affairs takes me to be a conjurer, and thinks that I can divine of all the changes and alterations that happen at the Porte; or that I have some magical glass, which represents to me

the continued series of remote events, with all the transactions of the imperial court, camp, and city ; or else he would not be so late in his dispatches, and send me such imperfect news. I am forced many times to address my letters by guess, not knowing whether the person to whom I write be in the same station he was a while ago, or whether he be among the living or the dead ; whether I should direct my dispatches to Constantinople or to the Elysian Shades.

My intelligence of the mussulman affairs is many times more owing to the French merchants who trade in the Levant, or to the expresses which come from ambassadors residing at Constantinople, than to that secretary, whose care it ought to be, that I should be timely informed of whatever happens in the Osman empire.

Surely Kifur Dramelec has some design upon me, in being always thus tardy and negligent. I scarce hear from him once in half-a-year ; whereas he is commanded by his superiors, as well as mine, to write to me every noon ; and then he sends me such a lame account of things, such fragments and scraps of news, that his letters need a comment to make them intelligible.

About four years ago I modestly taxed him with this neglect, when I had reason to do it in my own vindication to Minezim Aluph, Bassa : But Kifur heard of it, and was very angry. He sent me a letter full of invectives, which I answered with a kind of indifference, mixing raillery with my juster resentments. How that worked on him I know not ; but his reservedness ever since makes me conclude he studies revenge, and that he takes this method to accomplish it, by keeping me as much in ignorance as he dares of the changes and other important occurrences at the mysterious Porte. He knows it would be a crime little less than capital, not to write to me at

all. Such a wilful contumacy would straight proclaim him a traitor, since, among the other instructions which were given him with his commission, this charge was none of the least, that he should send frequent intelligence to all the Grand Seignior's agents, whether public or private, in the courts of Nazarene Princes. He is sensible, that such a manifest contempt of supreme authority would absolutely ruin him; therefore he goes more subtilly to work, for he writes, indeed, but very seldom, and then, with cunning artifice, either quite conceals, or at least disguises the most considerable transactions, only filling up his letters with trifling stories, and impertinent relations, nothing to my purpose; thinking by this means to bring upon me the displeasure of the grandees, through the mistakes I may commit for want of better advertisement.

Be it how it will, I am strangely at a loss sometimes what to think, or how to write to my superiors, or what sort of conduct I should use in this place, amidst so many various reports as are continually spread abroad in Europe concerning the affairs of the Seraglio, the shining city, and other parts of the Ottoman empire; whilst this Kifur still delays to ascertain me of any thing.

I have been wholly a stranger, till within these few days, to the fate of the Captain Bassa, who was strangled about a year ago, for his cowardice and ill-conduct against the Venetians; neither knew I any thing of the adventure and flight of his sons. I was equally ignorant of the succession of the Bassa of Buda in this important command, and of many other changes both by sea and land.

So at present here are a thousand rumours stirring about one thing or other in the East. Some say, that Chusein Bassa is strangled, and that the Captain Bassa is made Vizier Azem in his stead; others report, that this first minister was only deposed from that supreme digni-



ty, the seals being taken from him, but that, nevertheless, he still continues to be general of the Sultan's forces in Candia; a third sort affirm, that he intended to turn Christian, holding a secret correspondence with the Patriarch of Jerusalem, by whose means, and a general revolt of the Greeks, Armenians, and other Christians, under the Grand Seignior's jurisdiction, he sought to betray the Ottoman blood, and exalt himself to the empire.

I am not willing to believe, that such monstrous perfidy could enter into the heart of that illustrious hero; yet know not how to contradict it, for want of true advice.

It is reported also, that Signior Capello, the Venetian Bailo, or resident at the Happy Porte, has killed himself with a poniard, being driven to despair by his long confinement, and the cruel usage he had received from the Mussulmans. God knows whether it be true or no. It would be much to my satisfaction to have a particular account of all these things, and of whatsoever else occurs worthy of notice; for how can I discharge my trust, whilst I am thus kept in the dark?

They talk here of a violent plague that rages in Muscovy, and that above 200,000 people have died of it in the city of Moscow only, besides millions that have been swept away in the provinces of that vast empire. Those that really know not themselves, nor are acquainted with their own nature, will yet pretend to penetrate into the councils of the omnipotent, and pronounce this as a judgment on the Muscovites, for the cruelties they have committed in Poland. Doubtless; the methods of fate are inscrutable.

In the mean while, we are plagued here with a crew of vagabonds, whom they call Gypsies, or Egyptians; for they pretend to be descended from that place. They swarm up and down the country like caterpillars, devour-

ing the fruits of the earth. They boast of a profound skill in palmistry, physiognomy, and other sciences, cheating people of their money, under the notion of telling them their fortunes. Nobody knows from whence they come, or whither they go, for they are as uncertain as the wind; a nasty generation, and the very burden of the land. If any creatures be obliged to them, it is the mice and rats, with whom they seem to be in league; for they kill and eat all the cats they seize on.

Illustrious minister, I pray Heaven defend thee from all sorts of plagues and vermin, but especially from monsters in human shape.

Paris, 26th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1655.

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XV.—*To the same.*

As I am alive, these gypsies have enchanted me: I cannot put them out of my mind; and perhaps it will neither be impertinent nor troublesome to give thee a farther information of them.

There are several opinions concerning the original of these vagrants, and they have been thought worthy to be inserted into histories. Some say, they came out of Tartary or Scythia, and that they first appeared in these parts about the year 1417, of the Christians Hegira; at which time they entered into Saxony in troops, having the passport of Sigismund, King of Hungaria, and the son of Charles IV. They had also the recommendations of divers other princes, who looked upon them as holy persons, or prophets; for they pretended that they were commanded by God to travel over the whole earth, and not to have either houses or lands in their own possession; and that this was enjoined them as a penance to expiate

the sin of their ancestors, who, inhabiting Egypt in the days of Jesus the Son of Mary, the Christians Messias, refused to entertain that holy prophet and his mother, when they fled from the persecution of Herod.

Others are of opinion, that they came first out of Persia, and are of the race of those who adore the fire; being forced, once in seven years, to make decimations of their people, and send away many caravans, to seek their fortune in foreign countries, Persia not being able to sustain their numerous progeny.

A third sort affirm, that they are the posterity of the ten Jewish tribes that were carried away captives by Salmanassar King of Assyria. Nobody knows for certain what they are, or from whence. They are of swarthy complexions, wrapped up in mantles of cotton or wool; they speak seven languages; profess three sciences; obey one king or general, who always travels with them. The Indians call them Cingari, from a word in their language which signifies a kind of water-fowl, that hath no certain nest, but is forced every night to seek a new lodging; for so these gypsies rove from place to place. The Germans call them Zingener, from the word Zindel, which is the constant appellative of the king of these rambles; as Pharaoh was of old among the Egyptians, and Cæsar among the Romans. In many things they resemble the Torlakins and Faquirs of the East, boasting of extraordinary illuminations, and a constant familiarity with God; though some learned men among the Nazarenès esteem them no better than a crew of cheats and hypocrites, even as they do those Oriental Santones, who, they say, under the mask of an uncommon holiness, commit a thousand villanies.

God best knows what judgment is to be made either of the one or the other. But these Egyptians, as they

call them, whether they are really such or no, have no great marks of sanctity, in that they are very unclean: They seldom or never wash themselves, but, like the swine, wallow in all manner of filthiness, eating prohibited meats, and having their women in common, which are the two sources of all impurity.

As to the Faquirs of the East, they are strict observers of the law of abstinence and cleanness, whether they be muselmans, or the gentiles of India; and if in other matters they may be found faulty, it is very rare; and then they exceed not the character of humanity, which thou knowest is by nature prone to error, and subject to a thousand frailties and oversights. We are all men, and God does not expect our conduct to be that of angels. His repose is in himself; and if he takes any complacency in the things of the world, it is in beholding every thing act according to its nature. The exquisite form and symmetry of a bee, a spider, or a palmire, with the imitable architecture of the two former, and the admirable providence of the latter, may, for aught we know, afford him as much delight as the most celebrated beauty, strength, science, and performances of men; for his power and wisdom are equally manifest in all things. Every creature is perfect in its kind, only a wicked man is a blot in the universe.

Wouldst thou know what the Western Nazarenes are most busy about at this time? It is the election of a new pope. He is to be chosen by the College of Cardinals, who are princes of the Roman church. They are all shut up in a place which they call the Conclave. This is a certain gallery in the palace of the Vatican at Rome, where every cardinal has his cell, or apartment by himself, having only two servants to attend him. The conclave is surrounded by the Roman militia, to prevent all intercourse by

letters or otherwise, between those without and those within. The very dishes which are served up at the tables of the cardinals are narrowly searched, lest any letters should be conveyed in them. The last posts from Rome assure us, that there were no less than sixty-six cardinals thus shut up, when they left that city; and there they must remain night and day, without taking the fresh air, or seeing any body, till they have agreed in their election. There are two physicians, a surgeon, and an apothecary, shut up with them to serve them in case of sickness.

One of the conclavists is the Cardinal de Retz, who escaped out of his prison in this kingdom, and fled to Rome for protection, from whence he sent a letter to the archbishops, and other prelates of France, which being pronounced a seditious libel against the king and the government, was, in the end of the last moon, burnt publicly by the king's order, and all copies of it prohibited.

The king has also sent private instructions to the cardinals of his party at Rome, to keep a strict watch on the conduct of de Retz, and to oppose him in all things. There is nothing but caballing and intrigue among these insiders. They are good at a stratagem, and know better how to undermine one another, than to face their enemies in the open field; which is a character more suitable to women than men; whereas, thou knowest our heroes in the East know no other way to honour, victory, and empire, than by downright bravery and resolution, subduing all things by the force of their arms. But God, when he divided the nations of the earth, and separated the sons of Noah, assigned to every one a different constellation, according to whose influence the genius of

each people is disposed. They all obey the dictates of their particular stars, and the orders of eternal destiny.

Therefore, sage minister, since Mars is the planet of the sons of Hamael, and the ascendant of the Ottoman empire; there is no need that we should turn apostates from the star of our better fortune, to court the glances of Mercury, who is only the guardian of knaves and cheats.

Paris, 26th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1655.

## B O O K II.

LETTER I.—*To CARA HALI, Physician to the Grand Seignior.*

FORMERLY I could have written to thee with as much freedom as I could to Egri Boïnou, (on whom rest the favours of God) or as I can now to Dgnet Oglou, to my brother Pesteli Hali, or to any of my familiar friends: But when I consider the eminent station thou possessest, in that the health and life of the mighty emperor is now committed to thy skill and care, I am many times at a stand how to address myself. Methinks thou art tinctured with the majesty of that personage, whose hand thou so often hast the honour to touch, when required to discover, by the beating of his pulse, the interior maladies which afflict his royal soul. Yet I know thou still retainest thy humanity, and wilt not despise those whom thou hast once thought worthy of friendship.

Suffer me then to converse with a philosophic freedom, that is, in an address void of formalities and reserves.

I know it is of no import whether Mahmut be sick or well, provided the Grand Seignior be served. What

signify the languishing pains or more acute agonies of a slave, so long as he is able to carry on his master's interest? We are not born for ourselves only, but, by the very condition of our nature, are obliged to consecrate our lives to the service of others. It is a reciprocal debt, from which no mortal is free. Every man owes something to his relations, more to his friends, but most of all to the public.

Therefore I make no complaints of my lot, nor murmur at the will of destiny. I accuse not the stars of my nativity, nor tax them with unkindly aspects; but am contented with my fortune, be it good or bad, and resigned to the pleasure of Heaven.

As nature has framed my body infirm and weak, subject to a thousand maladies, so is my mind also harassed with distempers which have no number. But, above all, I labour under a kind of intellectual fever, a perpetual thirst of knowledge, which all the books and converse in the world cannot satisfy. There is no end of my doubts and scruples; every thing appears to me as ambiguous as the answers of the Delphic Oracle; nay, I am a perfect riddle to myself.

Tell me, dear Hali, how I should cure this dropsy of the mind, and I will not trouble thee with the inconsiderable diseases of my body. I have a high opinion of you physicians, and shall put more confidence in thy advice than in the Testa of the Musti. Conceal not thy art from Mahmut, who admires thee with a respect equal to that which he pays to the memories of Avicen, Al' Razi, Helal, and the rest of those excellent physicians, mentioned in our Arabian histories.

And now these ornaments of our nation are come into my mind, permit them to divert me from saying or thinking any more of myself at present; for it will be better.

to turn the discourse to such illustrious themes. At worst, it will be but an innocent digression.

In perusing the lives of those famous men, I meet with some passages which are very delightful. Perhaps thou hast seen the same; yet it will do thee no hurt to call them again to thy remembrance.

I have read in a certain manuscript, penned by Ibrahim the son of Helah, a renowned physician at Bagdat, this memoir of his father: "On a certain day, says he, that my father had administered physic to the Emperor Turzan, for which he was presented with a royal vest, rewarded with five thousand piastres, and by the emperor's command was carried through the streets in state, I observed that he was pensive amidst all those honours, and troubled in mind, when I thought he had greatest reason to rejoice: Therefore I said to him, My father, how comes it to pass, that you are thus dejected at a time when all the world expects to see you dissolved in pleasure? He answered, Son, he that has bestowed these honours on me is a fool, and does things preposterously, without reason; and therefore I cannot rejoice at these untimely favours he has showed me, being sensible they are not the effects of his judgment, but of his ignorance. I gave him a cathartic potion, which worked so strongly with him, that it excoriated his bowels, and brought forth blood; so that I was forced to use a different method, both to remove his distemper, and stop the violent flux. In the mean while, he ignorantly believing that the voiding of so much blood procured him the present ease and health he feels, therefore ordered these honours to be done me which thou seest. Now that which saddens me, is my fear, lest some time or other, he may through his ignorance commit as great an error on the contrary side, and



suspect that I have done him an injury, when there is no ground for it, and so put me to death."

Tell me, my friend, had not this physician reason for his behaviour and words? He was a man of great abilities, accomplished with divers sciences, and in high esteem with the princes and nobles of Arabia.

It were worth thy pains to peruse frequently the life of Avicen, written by himself, wherein thou wilt behold the methods he used to acquire a profound skill in the sciences: How he was at first puzzled in the metaphysics, and was almost driven to despair, till a dream unfolded to him whatsoever was difficult. When he was at a loss in any disquisition, he used to frequent the mosque, and pour forth devout and frequent orisons to the Source of intellectual light, till the thing was manifested to him. He sat up late at nights, having a lamp perpetually burning in his chamber, applying himself attentively to books and contemplation. This was his course, till he was consummate in all the liberal sciences, which was in the eighteenth year of his age.

But of all the physicians whose names adorn our history, none seems comparable to Thabet Eb'n Abraham, for his skill in exactly indicating the causes of a distemper, by the different measures of the pulse. Abul Pharai, his contemporary and friend, writes thus of him; "On a certain day, (says he) when I was with Thabet Eb'n Abraham of Harrain, in the house of Abu Mohammed the Vizier, Abu Adalla Ebno'l Hejai the poet being there also, reached forth his hand to Thabet, desiring him to feel his pulse. To whose the physician forthwith replied, Thou hast used a gross diet, and been intemperate in eating sour milk with veal.—The other answering, that it was true, and all the company, admiring, Abu'l Abbas the astrologer also reached forth his hand. But when

Thabet had felt his pulse, Thou, said he, hast committed an excess in taking too much of cold things; for, as I judge, thou hast eat about eleven pomegranates. Immediately Abu'l Abbas cried out, This is a prophet certainly, and more than a physician, for he speaks the truth to a tittle. Every body was astonished at his wondrous knowledge, and I more than all the rest: Wherefore, when I had him alone, I said, My dear Thabet, the study of physic is common to us both; therefore hide nothing from me, but discover freely by what art you were able to tell, that the poet eat four milk with veal, and not as well with beef or mutton; and that the astrologer eat no more nor less than eleven pomegranates. He answered, My mind suggested this to me, and prompted my tongue to utter it. Then I desired him to show me the scheme of his nativity, which he did at his own house; and considering it attentively, I observed, that the planet Jupiter was lord of the horoscope. Then I said to him, It is this speaks, my dear friend, not you, so often as you make these fortunate conjectures."—Thus far Abu'l Pharai.

God knows whether the stars have any such influence on men in their birth or no. I am not very credulous in this point; nor can the authority of the ancients, or the character of the Persian and Chaldean Magi captivate my mind in an implicit faith of things so liable to doubt. Who knows what the stars are made of, or for what ends they are created? Yet I must own, that some men seem to be born with inherent faculties, which others can never acquire with all the art and industry in the world. One man is of a poetic constitution; another is genially inclined to physic; a third excels in mechanics; every man has his peculiar gift; and yet, perhaps, all this while, the stars have nothing to do in the matter. However, if

there be any truth in astrology, the Persians, Chaldeans, Arabians, and Indians, seem to be the only men of all nations, constellated to understand this science perfectly. One knows not what to think, amidst so many appearances of truth and falsehood; nor can our thoughts be of any great import, be it how it will in these speculative matters. At the day of judgment, we shall not be asked, what proficiency we have made in logic, metaphysics, astronomy, or any other science; but, whether we have lived according to our nature, as men endowed with morality and reason. In that hour, it will more avail us, that we have thrown a handful of flour in charity to a nest of contemptible pismires, than that we could muster all the hosts of Heaven, and call every star by its proper name. For then the constellations themselves shall disappear, the sun and moon shall give no more light, and all the frame of nature shall vanish; but our good and bad works shall remain for ever recorded in the archives of eternity.

If from this manner of writing thou shalt conjecture I am melancholy, and wilt also reveal the causes and remedy of this distemper, thou shalt be more to me than a thousand Avicens, Helals, Thabets, or all the physicians and astrologers of the East; for these kind of thoughts are mournful as the shadow of death.

Paris, 23d of the 4th Moon, of the Year 1655.

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## II.—*To AFIS, Bassa.*

I KNOW not whether thou wilt praise or condemn the sentence which the Elector of Saxony pronounced not long ago on a poor fellow for killing a deer. Yet, because there is something very singular in it, I will relate

the whole passage, as I received it from Nathan Ben Saddy, the Jew at Vienna.

In the moon of Cheurval, a certain citizen of Wirtemberg was accused before the elector, for hunting in his forest, and killing one of his deer: The duke, in a rage, commanded him to be set upon a stag, his hands chained to the horns, and his feet under the belly of the beast, ordering that the stag, with this burden, should be let loose, to run whither he would. The poor frightened stag, not being accustomed to such a load, and terrified with the rattling of the chains, ran away full speed over hills and dales, through thickets of briars and thorns, never stopping till he had measured above three-and-thirty German leagues, and then tired with so vast a race, he fell down; at which instant, a caravan was coming by that place out of Silesia.

The poor wretch on the back of the stag, almost dead with the pains he had undergone, in so continued and violent a motion, being also sorely bruised, and his flesh torn and mangled by the boughs of trees, as the stag rushed through thick woods, cried aloud to the caravan, begging that some of them would in mercy dispatch him out of his torments; but they, either for fear of the duke's displeasure, or for other reasons, refused him this kindness; so that after the stag had rested a while, and recovered new spirits, he began a fresh career; and never ceased running till he arrived at a certain monastery or convent of religious, where he beat against the gate with his horns, till some of the dervises opened it, and let him in. They, astonished to see a man thus pinioned to a stag, his face, arms, legs, and all his body covered with blood, and himself ready to expire, immediately brought him cordials and other refreshments, whilst some were employed in loosing his chains; but being informed by his own

mouth how he came into this condition, they began to think of turning him loose again, for fear of the duke's anger. However, suffering themselves to be overcome by the importunity of the miserable man, and relying on their ecclesiastic privileges (for here in the West the convents are generally allowed sanctuaries for all sorts of offenders), they took him into their protection; but he expired that night.

It is hard to determine, whether the duke or these devils were in the right or wrong: The French, who of late have by a fashion learned to grow obdurate, justify the proceedings of this prince; saying, that pity is a passion fit only for women, children, and fools: They esteem it a mark of a great spirit, a mind capable of empire, not to be moved with the sighs or tears of the miserable, but to frown or laugh at the misfortunes of others. This, they say, is the only method to harden men for war, conquest, and plunder, where the victors are to cut their way to honour and riches through the hearts of the vanquished, to quench the ardent thirst of glory with human blood, and to celebrate their triumphs only in the midst of horrid massacres and funerals.

It is true, these principles and actions are allowable in men of the sword, when they fight the battles of their king and country in heat of blood: But clemency and compassion are virtues becoming the greatest prince, or most valiant general, when their enemies are reduced, by the fortune of war, to kiss the dust of their feet, and beg for mercy; or, when in time of peace, their subjects fall into a crime which may admit of indulgence. Certainly these Western infidels have wrong notions of humanity, in asserting, that cruelty is either a sign of a noble nature, or a step to true happiness; since the most hard-hearted tyrant, one time or other, will have need of compassion

himself; especially in sickness, and the agonies of death, which perhaps prove more tormenting to him, than to the merciful and generous. It is recorded of Al Hejai Eb'n Hesham, a famous Arabian captain, that when in a malignant fever, he called for water to drink, and it was denied him by the physicians who had the care of his health: "It is enough, (said he) Rueno'ddaula, once my lieutenant, to whom I forgave three treasons, and who died a natural death, has refreshed me at this minute with a liquor unknown: sure it is the wine of paradise." And from that moment he began to recover his health, after which he lived many years, often rehearsing this passage among his familiar friends to his last day.

But the infidels are either ignorant of these examples, or, if they know them, pride will not suffer them to learn morality and justice. They are destined, the greatest part, to be incredulous to the day of judgment. How many prophets has God sent into all nations, to teach them the right way, and not the way of such with whom he is displeas'd! Yet they will not be converted: They look on the apostles and messengers of the Eternal, with the eyes of swine; they groan under the burden of their sensuality, and like those filthy animals return to their mire again. Yet that superlatively Merciful winks at their frailties, and visits them with his graces every morning; but they put their fingers in their ears, and turn away in disdain, as from a beggar; they reject the King of all things, as a fugitive and vagabond on earth.

From that delectable Essence, the odour of whose sweetness is diffused through the elements, and refreshes the minds of the true faithful, let us, by continual devotion and virtue, attract divine tinctures, till our hearts be all transformed into incense, and in this aromatic pile, our

souls expire like the phœnix, to revive again in the joys of paradise, in amours which know no end.

Paris, 8th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1655.

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III.—*To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew, at Vienna.*

I WONDER at nothing, much less at the extravagant caprices of tyrants. Methinks there appears no novelty in modern transactions; they are but a repetition of ancient practices, under new forms. Of all the events of this age, not one has come to my knowledge which gives me a surprise: Yet I must confess, there is something very singular in the punishment the Duke of Saxony inflicted, as thy letter tells me, on the poor deer-stealer. And if it be just to put a man to death on such an account, as the Indians hold, the duke seems very ingenious and accurate in the choice he made of an executioner.

The ancient Romans had a law which they called *Lex Talionis*, which in all criminal cases appointed the punishment to be in some circumstances adequate to the fault; and thou knowest Moses your lawgiver left much the same statutes; requiring the loss of the eye of him who had put another man's out, a tooth for a tooth, an arm for an arm, and so proportionably of other injuries. But this prince seems to have made a supplement, where these laws appeared short; and has showed a most exquisite niceness of revenge in the destiny of the unfortunate huntsman, to cause a stag to be in so peculiar a manner the instrument of his death, who had villanously murdered one of the same species: Doubtless it was a princely freak of justice; and had it been done purely to avenge the blood of the slaughtered beast, and not in vindication of his own right, I could not forbear to pronounce it

a frolic worthy of a hero. But he himself is frequently guilty of the same kind of murder, as are most of the great men in Europe, whose tables are no other than the altars of gluttony, smoking with flesh and blood, whilst becatombs of animals are there sacrificed to voracious appetites, the idols of these Western people.

Metinks, therefore, it had been more generous and becoming a prince, to pardon the poor fellow a theft, which perhaps was the only method he had to preserve himself and his family from starving; and for aught I know, he had as much right, according to the law of nature, to kill a stag, as the owner has. But there is no talk to be made of right or wrong, where power overrules.

India is at present the only public theatre of justice towards all living creatures: There it is a capital crime to shed the blood of any animal, and punished with death no less than the murder of a man. The princes and nobles indeed inclose deer, and other innocent creatures in parks, not with a design to prey upon them at their pleasure, but to defend them from the violence of others; whilst those happy animals range and feed where they please within those pales, free from peril, and never fearing any other death, save that they pay to nature, which they have spun out the accustomed term of their life. They also build hospitals for a like purpose; and are at a great charge every year to redeem a certain number of oxen and cows from slaughter; for they esteem it a barbarous and inhuman cruelty to murder those creatures which are the nurses of our life.

The law of Moses, if I mistake not, obliges all of thy nation to certain specific tenderesses toward the dumb animals. And Eesa the prophet, a man of no obscure extract, but of a noted race among the Hebrews, says,



“He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; and he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he beheaded a dog.” And in another place the same prophet says, in the person of God, “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? I am offended with the smoke of your burnt-offerings, and delighted with the smell of broiled fat, I take no delight in the blood of bulks, lambs, or goats. Who hath required these things at your hands? Bring no more vain oblations, which my soul hateth.”

By these expressions, one would think the prophet brings in God, saying that ever he commanded any such sacrifices, or shedding of blood, and protesting against it as an abomination. Where then is the reputation of those writings which go under the name of Moses? for in those these bloody victims are expressly enjoined. God cannot be contradictory to himself. Doubtless, a great part of the true law which God gave to Moses, was lost in the former captivity of your nation, when your cities and provinces were quite dispeopled, your fathers led away by the victorious monarchs of the East, and your choicest monuments abolished; so that what remains now is only a collection of fragments patched up by Esdras and other industrious scribes; to which they gave the specious title of the law of Moses, that so they might fasten the wavering people in obedience to something, though of their own devising.

Nathan, I do not go about to seduce thee. Examine all things; believe neither me nor thy own rabbis, but trust only thy reason, which will stand by thee at the day of judgment, when all things else shall fail.

Paris, 8th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1655.

IV.—To DGEBE NAFIR, *Bassa*.

THESE Nazarenes, like the followers of the prophet, are divided into innumerable sects; and so it is in all religions. Men cannot think alike; nature itself delights in variety. God has diversified the faculties of our souls, as he has the constitutions of our bodies: The zealot is subject to choler, the bigot to melancholy; the libertine is of a sanguine complexion; and as for the rest, they are but so many walking speaking lumps of phlegm. This is the physical division of mortals; under which are comprehended the various tempers which result from the different mixture of these four radical principles; and for this we must thank Galen and Hippocrates.

But if we consult the astrologers, they will assign as many different humours and complexions as there be stars in the heavens, at least as there be constellations. They will tell you of the bull and the bear, and God knows what heavenly stories: The dragon shall spit venom on one man's nativity out of his mouth, and give another a poisonous lick with his tail. If we believe all they say, there is not an herb in the field but has its particular star, whose influence causes it to grow and prosper; though Moses tells us that all the vegetables appeared on the earth even before the stars themselves had their existence in the heavens.

But whether there be any truth in astrology or no, this is certain, that men differ in their sentiments of religion as they do in their faces. The physiognomy of faith is infinitely various; one man believes in Moses, another in Jesus the Son of Mary, a third in Mahomet our holy lawgiver. Then these are subdivided into innumerable parties; the Jews have seventy eminent religious factions; there are numbered seventy-and-one sects of Christians;

and seventy-two of mussulmans. These are all at odds about words and the exterior ceremonies ; so zealous for charity and peace, that they are in perpetual wars for its sake, murdering one another in the love of God ; and such stout champions for the truth, that they scruple not to tell ten thousand lies in its defence.

The differences between the Greek and Armenian Nazarenes, the Nestorians and Jacobites, with other sects of the East, are not unknown to the ministers of the Porte. But perhaps thou art a stranger to the newer schisms of the West.

The most eminent division of Christendom, at this time, is into catholics and protestants : The former obey the Roman musti, and boast of an uninterrupted series of caliphs from Peter the vicar of the Messias down to the present pope ; the latter are the followers of Luther and Calvin, men who pretended to certain new lights, and claimed a right to reform the errors of their fathers in matters of faith and worship. God best knows who is in the right or wrong of these two parties ; but they have always been at daggers-drawing in defence of their several tenets, persecuting and massacring one another for conscience sake. Both sides appeal to the written law, to apostolical traditions, to the testimony of the ancients, the decrees of councils, and the practice of those whom they call the primitive church ; yet neither part will allow the other a sufficient judgment to interpret those memoirs of antiquity, nor an authentic power to decide controversies of this nature. Thus their disputes are like to last till the final day of decision, when all human quarrels shall be determined before the grand tribunal.

In the mean time, they take all advantages to execute their spite and malice on each other, under the notion of justice and piety. We are daily alarmed here with tra

gical relations of horrid murders and butcheries committed on the protestants of Piedmont, and other parts under the Duke of Savoy; whilst some say that all these reports are false, and the sufferings of those people are, according to law, the due punishment of their rebellious actions.

It is not in my power to adjust their differences; nor is it material to a Mussulman which of them has the law on their side: Yet if I were inclined to take any part, it should be that of the oppressed. Cruelty I abhor, and our holy Prophet has forbid force to be used in matters of religion, since the conscience is responsible to none but God.

May that God, from whose unity have sprung all the different essences in the world, and all the variety in nature, give us grace to love the whole creation, and not to shed blood unless in the sacred combat.

Paris, 13th of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1655.

V.—*To WILLIAM VOSPEL, a Recluse of Austria.*

I HAD concluded thee dead, till thy letter certified me to the contrary. So long a silence between friends would put any man upon the same thoughts. Ten years have slipped away between my last to thee and thy answer. I hope thou dost not measure time after the rate of the seven sleepers. Perhaps thou hast been enjoined a ten years silence, and abstinence from all manner of conversation, by the superior of thy convent: Such severities are not uncommon in religious societies, where the main business is to acquire perfection. The Armenian monasteries are much more rigid, where, but for one extravagant word, I have known a man's tongue looked up for

the space of two-and-twenty years, under pain of excommunication, and then released only for the sake of a most significant jest put on the patriarch in mute signs. Wit will find a way to vent itself, though it be at the fingers ends; and for aught I know, thou hast obliged thy abbot to take off thy censure by the like method. There was abundance of satire in the subsannation of the ancient Romans, and no less rhetoric in the strut or grimace of the modern Italians; the mimics of Scaramouchi are a perfect lampoon, and Harlequin is burlesque all over.

Thou knowest I always entertain thee with one frivolous discourse or other to divert thy melancholy, and thy own letters give me encouragement: They seem to be written in a pleasant humour. But tell me, have I guessed right at the cause of so tedious a reservedness or no? Hast thou been forced all this while to speak with thy hands, feet, nose, and the emphatic motions of thy head and eyes? If it were so, I fancy thou wert excellent company among thy grave phlegmatic brethren, and in a fair way to understand the language of the beasts, who by curvetting, creeping, leaping, frisking their tails, and other postures, express their various passions, desires, and necessities, as intelligibly to those who are used to them, as we can do by the most elegant addresses in words.

But to be serious: If for the sake of virtue this penance be imposed on thee by him who presides over thy convent, or thou hast voluntarily undertaken so difficult a part of self-denial, on the score of philosophy or religion, thou hast approved thyself wise and brave in not flinching. A coward in religious matters is as despicable as in the engagements of the world: It is honourable to face temptations, and come off with victory.

As for what thou desirest to know concerning the se-

pulchre of King Childeric, it is esteemed a piece of great antiquity, in regard he was the fourth monarch of France. He reigned over the Gauls or Franks in the year 458, Severus being emperor of Rome, Severinus and Degalaiphus consuls. Yet in little more than three years he was deposed, and banished by his subjects, whilst Ægidius, a Roman, was crowned in his stead. Neither did this man please the people so well, but that after some experience of his oppression, avarice, and other vices, they expelled him also, and recalled their lawful sovereign; for Ægidius had vexed them with unreasonable taxes, fleecing them of many millions, which he privately sent out of the kingdom, disposing of this vast treasure at Rome, and among his friends in other parts, as a support against future contingencies; for he looked for some back-blows of fate. Childeric therefore being restored to his crown, enjoyed it till his death, which was in the year 484; after whom succeeded in the kingdom Clodovæus the Great, who was the first French king that embraced Christianity.

• The time when Childeric's tomb was first discovered was about two years ago, when the cathedral of Tour-ñay wanted reparation; for, as the labourers were digging up the old charnel-house, they encountered a long stone, which giving them some fatigue, they broke in pieces, and found under it the entire skeleton of a man, lying at length, with abundance of Greek medals of gold, and some other curiosities of the same metal, among which was a ring with this motto:

SIGILLUM CHILDERICI REGIS.

All these relics were at first possessed by the canons of that church where they were found, of whom they were

begged by the Archduke of Austria, who has them in his custody. Therefore those who told thee they are in the King of France's hands were misinformed themselves, or designed to abuse thee; for this cannot be supposed during the present wars between France and Spain, when they are more ready on both sides to plunder one another, than to grant civilities of this obliging nature.

I perceive thou art grown a great antiquary; and therefore, in token of my esteem, I have sent thee a cabinet of such old things as I have scraped together in my travels, and during my residence in this city.

The agates which you will find in the uppermost drawer may easily be dated by their figures, which are all after the fashion of gentile Rome. As for the shells in the second, I leave them to thy own judgment; only this I will say, that they are not common. The third contains a miscellany of several antiques; the knives were used by the ancient Roman priests in their sacrifices; the weights are at least twelve hundred years old, by the parallels which I have seen in the king's library; the rings are also of the Parthian make; and the arrow to which they are fastened retains its Oriental venom to this hour, as thou wilt find by trying it on any animal that deserves it. But after all, the lowermost drawer contains nothing but counterfeits; for those medals are the work of Parmezan, the finest engraver in the world. If thou knowest not his character, I will tell thee in a word: He was famous for imitating so exactly the most ancient medals, that the transcripts could not be discerned, even by the most skilful artists, from the originals.

Accept these with the same good will as I did when they were presented to me, and tell me wherein else I can gratify thy wishes.

You monks are infinitely happy in the advantages

of retirement and tranquillity ; you are free from the cares which molest other mortals ; the bell rings you to prayers and to your repast ; you have nothing else to regard but your contemplations and studies. Many great lights have sprung from your various orders ; and I tell thee, Father William, the world will be disappointed if thou shouldst prove a dark lantern, and only be wise for thyself.

Paris, 25th. of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1655.

VI.—*To the Most Illustrious and Incomparable VIZIER AZEM,*  
*at the Porte.*

By the sound which the sun makes at his going down, I swear I was not mistaken in the idea I had of thy generosity ; and the dispatch with which thou hast honoured the slave Mahmut, confirms me in a perfect security of thy favour and protection.

I shall with exquisite diligence obey thy orders ; but it cannot be attempted without vast sums of money. And if I may be thought worthy to give advice to my superiors, the most effectual way to accomplish this will be, by sending one of the principal ministers to this court with a splendid embassy ; for this young king expects very honourable addresses from all who seek his more intimate friendship ; therefore a chiaus would be slighted on such an occasion, and mar all the design. I would counsel, that somebody be sent who perfectly understands the genius of the French, and the particular aim of Cardinal Mazarini.

Under the protection of such a one, I should be able, without hazard of a discovery, to act all that is necessary to carry on this design with good success. Here are a-



abundance of needy courtiers, on whom gold will have a powerful influence; but neither I in person, nor any one whom I shall depute, can make such tenders, unless there were here some known public ambassador from the Grand Seignior to countenance the business; for otherwise it will presently be whispered, that some private agent ~~has~~ here incognito; they will start a thousand chimeras of jealousy, and so I may run the hazard of a second imprisonment, when the cardinal shall call to mind the occasion of my first. All that I can then say of my being a Moldavian, will find no credit; and it will be no less than a miracle, if they do not expose me to a scrutiny for the mark of circumcision, which if it be found, all is betrayed and ruined.

I do not value the punishments they will inflict on me, nor the loss of my life; but I dread the more important consequences of such a discovery; the unmasking the secrets of the Grand Seignior to infidels.

These are the chief reasons I have to offer in behalf of an honourable embassy. As to the person whom thou shalt think fit to employ in so glorious a trust, I will not presume to add any thing to what I have said already; that he be a man of experience in the French affairs, well versed in the knowledge of Christian policy, the different interests of the courts of Europe, and one that exactly knows what advantage to make of the new pope; for after long debates, the cardinals have at last elected one, who has assumed the name of Alexander VII.

It is hard to judge, at his first accession to that sovereign chair, what interest this prelate will embrace, whether that of France or Spain; or whether his conduct will be neutral, deporting himself with an equal indifference to all the Nazarene princes, whom he calls his sons, endeavouring to compose their quarrels, and unite their

forces against the mussulmans: I tell thee, nobody can be yet assured what the temper of the Roman musti may prove; for it is usual for the aspiring cardinals to promise many things in hopes of the papacy, which they never perform when they have once obtained the uncontrollable command. Dissimulation is ranked among the principal virtues in the court of Rome; and he that knows not how to disguise his affections, is not thought worthy of any important trust. Adonai the Jew has lost his liberty in that city for being defective in this courtly accomplishment. It seems, he and some others of his nation railed too passionately and openly at the idolatry of the Romans. Yet I expect daily to hear of his relief; for I understand by a letter from him, that he was excepted out of the number of those whose condemnation is irrevocable.

I reproved him for his immorality, in reflecting on the established religion of the country where he resides: But this kind of arrogance is the peculiar vice of the Hebrews; they despise all other people in the world; whereas, thou knowest the impartial God respects not one nation more than another, for they are all equally the works of his hands; and for aught we know, he tolerates the variety of religions that are extant in the world, with the same indifference as he dispenses his common blessings to such an infinite number of men of diverse faces.

The multiplicity in the universe exalts the diving unity, which is the root of all; and if there be ten thousand myriads of worlds, they all sprang from One Cause, and there they end; for He is the first and last of every thing.

Paris, 2d of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1655.

VII.—*To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.*

THE Egyptians have a proverb, “That he who thinks and speaks of God only when he is melancholy, sacrifices to the planet Pharois, or Saturn, and not to the most high and exalted King of all things, who is the fountain of joy to men and angels.”

I counsel thee not to list thyself in the number of those who adore the stars, by cherishing sad ideas of the ever-indulgent and merciful divinity; nor think thyself the less liable to this censure, because it proceeds from a nation which was once at enmity with the sons of Jacob. Despise not the wisdom of that people, from whom even Moses your lawgiver learned all his, and from whom all nations borrowed improvements of learning, if they are not indebted to them for its first rudiments.

By what I have said, thou wilt perceive that I consult thy happiness, and would have thee chase away vain fears and superstitious thoughts, the mere product of an ill-tempered spleen, which is the peculiar malady of thy nation. Let thy heart be always cheerful, for God loves every thing that he has made; the universe overflows with his bounty. Be not too religious, nor strain the faculties he has given thee for thy support, and not for thy bane.

I had rather hear from thee matter of news than these dismal scruples about thy soul. If thou art not willing to embrace the mussulman faith, in God’s name continue to observe the law of Moses, and prosecute thy affairs with alacrity.

Thou hast been very slack of late in sending me advice of what passes at Vienna, and other parts of Germany. We have flying reports here of the death of Eleanora the empress; and that on the same day whereon she

died, Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, the emperor's son, was elected King of the Romans. I know not how to write to the ministers of the Porte, till thou hast ascertained me of these things. For God's sake be speedy in thy dispatches, and inform me what is done at the diet of Frankfort. Rouse up thyself, and banish superfluous cares. Remember that as there is but one God, so there is but one law, but one thing necessary to men, that is, to live according to reason. This is engraven in every man's heart, and there needs no comment to explain it. Thou art a sufficient lawyer, rabbi, doctor, and interpreter to thyself; let not others amuse thee with fables.

I will now acquaint thee with something of certainty. The French have gained Landrecies, a strong town in Flanders: It was surrendered to them on the 22d of this moon; and the next day all the garrison marched out, consisting of fifteen hundred men, besides three hundred wounded.

The king is gone, upon this good news, to view and take care of his new conquest; for this is not the only town the Spaniards have lost: they talk of Maubeuge, Bovines, and Conde; all which, according to fresh report, are in the hands of the French. This young monarch is strangely fortunate.

If thou canst inform me of such successful campaigns among the people of the North, fail not to do it in season, for we are not placed in these stations to whistle to sheep.

Paris, 29th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1655.

VIII.—To MUSTAPHA LULU BEAMTILLA, a Man of  
the Law.

I would willingly be admitted into Paradise, as well as other muselmans; neither would I think, speak, or do any thing which might prejudice my title, and baulk my pretensions to eternal happiness. This desire is natural to all men; and when I profess it, thou mayest believe me without an oath. Yet methinks I would not go hoodwinked to Heaven, but would fain enjoy the benefit of my sense and reason in my advances to that region of bliss.

I believe the Alcoran is the oracle of God, and it is so firmly imprinted in my memory, that I could repeat it verbatim from the beginning to the end without missing a versicle. I give an entire credence to the doctrine of the resurrection; being naturally desirous of immortality; but I cannot entertain the gross conceit which the greatest part of muselmans have of the resurrection; that is, that our very dust shall be raised again, and organised into a body. The Nazarenes are of the same opinion: but methinks there is no need of stretching and straining of nature; besides, this opinion is inconsistent with other fundamental doctrines of the muselman law.

We are all taught to believe, that the souls of just men, saints, and martyrs, immediately on their departure from the body, ascend to Paradise. If so, then they either live there in an unbodied estate, or they have new bodies assigned them by the same Providence which gave them their old. Be it which way it pleases God, it will appear a manifest botch in the works of the Omnipotent, and indecorum in nature, to make these souls either cast off their new bodies at the day of judgment, for the sake of their old rotten relics, after they have enjoyed all the

ravishing delights of Eden for so many ages, or to stand in need of any bodies at all after they have lived so long in a separate condition. There is no sense in it. Doubtless, this opinion was first hatched by those who believed the sleep of the soul; and held that it was inseparable from the body; for then they had no other way to comfort themselves with any probable hopes of a surviving immortality, but by maintaining, that as the soul slept with the body in the grave, so both soul and body should conjointly rise again at the day of doom.

Or perhaps this figure of our resurrection was inculcated to insinuate the faith of an immortal state into the duller minds of those who were incapable of comprehending either the pre-existence of souls, their self-subsistence after death, or their translation into other bodies.

It seems to me much more easy to believe, according to the most obvious works of nature, that after our dissolution here, we shall either assume some body of air, fire, or other elemental supplement, or by magnetic transmigration shall be united to some vegetable or animal embryo, than to dream of re-collecting all our scattered ashes together after so many thousands of years wherein they have been dispersed, perhaps, through all the ranges of the universe.

Surely our holy lawgiver, and all the other prophets, intended no other thing by the doctrine of the resurrection, but only to convince the world that the soul was immortal, and that consequently there would be a reward of good and bad works after this life. We shall live for ever, old Lawyer; and what signifies it whether we have the same bodies or others, so long as we are happy in any state? And if we are metamorphosed, we cannot fail of our specific felicity, since every creature is happy in his

own essence. Then let us be apes, dromedaries, camels, or any thing but hogs, and we shall have bliss enough. That creature is the very emblem of uncleanness, and therefore its life cannot be the object of a muffled man's wish. Yet we know not the laws of our change or transmigration from this mortal life; for the soul, according to Pythagoras and the ancients, is capable of all forms.

If thou wonderest what has put me upon this discourse, it is the remembrance of what I have heard thee relate, of the apparition of dead men's bones in the cemetery of Grand Cairo in Egypt, at a certain season of the year, when multitudes of people by custom flock thither to behold this wonderful scene of a sham resurrection. I can give it no better title, since in all probability it is only the effect of some artifice used by the Christians to procure money from the admiring crowd; and I am confirmed in this belief by a letter I received from Mehemet, the exiled eunuch, who now resides at Cairo; and having been curious to observe this celebrated miracle, among the other rarities of this city, sent me such an account of this passage as convinces me there is some cheat in it.

He tells a great many other things of the superstition and ignorance of the Egyptians, as to the pyramids and the supposed spirits which guard them. In all, he laments the condition of mortals who have so far degenerated from themselves, and suffered their reason to be so debauched with fables.

Sage Mustapha, thou art of the race of those who have preserved science and philosophy. A halo of light invests thy soul; let no dark opinion of God and his works eclipse thy intellects.

Paris, 20th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1655.

IX.—To SOLYMAN KYZZLIR AGA, *Prince of the Black Eunuchs.*

THY dispatch came in a happy hour; yet the contents of it surpris'd me. It is a strange turn of fortune, that the bassa of Aleppo, after so many rebellions, should become the Sultan's favourite, and be invest'd in the highest dignity of the empire; yet who knows but this may be the only effectual course to reclaim him, and of an enemy to render him a friend; for ambition is a vice so nearly bordering on virtue, so refined and subtle in complexion, that when the passion which cherishes it is once gratified with its proper object, it soon becomes a virtue itself, and transforms a libertine to a hadgi, ranking a man to-day among the most deserving heroes, who but yesterday was in the number of the seditious.

Therefore I cannot but highly applaud the counsel of those who perswaded the Grand Seignior to this uncommon choice of the Visier Azem. The whole empire has languish'd for want of a man of abilities in that supreme station, ever since the seal was taken from the most illustrious Chusacim Bassa, through the malice of his enemies; and in this juncture, they could not have pitched on a man more capable of the charge than this bold bassa, who, besides his experience in the wars, both by sea and land, is looked on as the stoutest man in this age. As for his former crimes, they proceeded only from his discontent and thirst of glory, which is now sufficiently allay'd by the bounty of our sovereign. The cause, therefore, of his extravagancies being thus seasonably removed, the effect will naturally cease.

But suffer me to ask thee, Do they not resent, at the seraglio, his approaches to that sanctuary of mortals with such a formidable retinue? Thou tellest me, he is at-



tended by forty thousand men, an equipage fit for a sovereign monarch. Perhaps it is only the effect of his martial genius, and that he is willing to appear like a soldier; or it may be, he really suspected danger, and that he was designed for a sacrifice, which made him come thus guarded to the feet of his master, that his son might revenge his death, by some desperate attempt on Constantinople. Be it how it pleases God, it seems the Sultan winked at all, and received him with such marks of his esteem and affection, as are seldom vouchsafed to subjects. I hope the event will answer his expectation. These new methods of clemency may prove more successful than the severe conduct of former times. Men of great souls are sooner subdued by favour, than force and cruelty.

I am extremely obliged to thee for thy instructions, which I shall exactly observe in writing to this supreme minister. Thou hast matched my own thoughts in this advice; for knowing that *bassa's* temper, it will be policy, as well as justice, frankly to own what I have written against him, and not stuff my letter with abject, fawning submissions, or sneaking excuses: He is brave himself, and will be pleased to see a man resolute in his duty.

However, let the consequence be what it will, I must follow the measures of my own integrity. There is something so satisfactory in truth, and an honest blunt carriage, as far surpasses the little faint pleasures of artifice and dissimulation; and I should be weary of my life were I forced to preserve it by such effeminate tricks. Yet I must confess it is a vast encouragement to find thy sentiments the same. What is this world, that we should be so fond of it? or what is the life of mortals, that we need be so over-studious of prolonging the respiration of that

breath, which may with as much ease be all breathed out at once, as by so many successive millions of moments; for death properly possesses but an instant of time; we more does life; every gasp renews the one, and the last commences and finishes the other. As to pleasure and pain, we generally have an equal share of them; and it appears to me an equal, if not a greater happiness, at once to be freed for ever from the latter, than by such an irksome composition to protract the enjoyment of the former.

Brave Solymán, when I contemplate thy virtue, it inspires me with courage against the vast mists of fear, which the magic of opinion has raised before the eyes of mortals. I embrace thee with an extended soul, and wish thee the two extremes of happiness, plenitude of joys in this life, and an immortal series of felicity in paradise. Live for ever, thou generous son of Cham!

Paris, 2d of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1655.

X.—*To the Most Illustrious VISIER AZEM at the Porte.*

By the fouts of all my progenitors, I was glad to hear the news of thy advance to this glorious height of power. Yet when thou wert bássá of Aleppo, and held correspondence with the Venetians, I accused thee to the diván, doing thereby no small service to the Ottoman empire; for which thou hast now reason in honour to reward me, knowing that I prevented a great deal of confusion and blood. It will not become the first minister to cherish private revenge, or harbour ill-thoughts of a faithful slave. In discovering thy intrigues at that time, I did but perform my duty to the Grand Seignior, thy lord and mine; nay, for ought thou knowest, I was hap-

ply instrumental in saving thy life, which might have been lost in the pursuit of those hazardous projects thou wert then engaged in. Be it how it will, thou art now living, and installed in the most illustrious charge of the empire; and without flattery I speak it, to a braver man could not have ascended to that dignity. May God long continue thee in it, to the joy and advantage of all the Mussulmans.

All the world extol thy valour and boldness; especially by the Nazarenes, among whom the bazaar of Aleppo is famous. They also highly commend thy justice; and thou wilt find in the register, that when I acquainted my superiors of thy revolt, I was not envious in concealing thy virtues.

Therefore I beg of thee not to be partial in thy resentments, but consider Mahmut as a faithful slave, who will never transgress the commands of the mysterious Bench, nor suffer any sinister motives to bias him, though it were in favour of his own brother; for this is the severe conduct that is expected of me by my superiors, and which thou thyself wilt require at my hands.

But I believe thou needest not these addresses to move thee to generosity; thy own native justice will suggest to thee, that I rather merit a reward than a punishment for doing my duty, though it were in accusing thyself.

Confiding, therefore, in thy goodness, and my own innocence, I shall not despair of that protection and favour from thee which all thy predecessors have afforded me, since my arrival at this place; nay, I think thy friendship and esteem is rather due to me, than a thousand sycophants and flatterers.

I will in this confidence write freely to thee, as I have been commanded, and vent my thoughts without a ti-

morous reserve; for thou art the just judge of the judges among the faithful.

There is no doubt but thou hast heard of the Duke of Lorraine, a famous warrior in these western parts, but now a prisoner of state in Spain. I sent intelligence last year to Mustapha Berber Aga of the grounds and circumstances of this prince's confinement, whereof thou canst not be ignorant; for all my dispatches are made public to the ministers of the blessed Porte.

The brother of that duke immediately succeeded him, by the King of Spain's orders, in the command of the army in Flanders; they call him Duke Francis. Every body thought that he had consented to the imprisonment of his brother, as being disgusted at his incontinency, avarice, and other vices. It was supposed also, that his own ambition, and thirst of honour, had corrupted the fidelity and love he owed to the son of his mother; as knowing, that by his fall he himself should rise to the dignity of general, which his brother enjoyed during his liberty.

But now it is evident that this Duke Francis did all along dissemble his resentments of his brother's calamity; for he is lately revolted from the King of Spain, and come over to the French, with five thousand horse and foot. He has openly declared, that he will never give rest to his sword till he has either procured his brother's release, or deeply revenged the injuries which have been done him. He was received by the French king with all imaginable endearments and caresses; the whole court are emulous in striving to excel one another in the demonstrations of their civility and respect to this prince: and they have culled out the best quarters for his soldiers. This nation is always hospitable to strangers; more espe-

cially to such as court their friendship after this extraordinary way, who enter into their interests, and engage in their quarrels. Yet neither France, nor all the kingdoms of Europe together, can match the bounty of the munificent Porte, which pardons and receives, with open embraces, her most implacable enemies, on their submissions and repentance.

Commander of the mussulman grandees, thou art but a man, and hast not exceeded that character in the worst of thy errors. Now thou art assumed to a charge which requires the fidelity and prudence of an angel. If thou shalt reform the state, and restore the mussulman affairs to their true lustre, we shall have reason to contemplate thy life, in some measure, as a parallel to that of Crassus, who was pardoned three treasons by Cæsar, and afterwards became the most loyal and serviceable man in the Roman empire.

Paris, 2d of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1655.

XI.—To MEHEMET, an exiled Eunuch, at Cairo in Egypt.

THOU tellest me wonderful things of Egypt, such as almost surpass credit; and I perceive thou thyself dost not believe the story of the annual resurrection of bones, which is so much talked of by travellers. My cousin Kous ridiculed it with smart reason, and was almost in danger of his life among the bigotted Moors and Coptites.

But I could hardly imagine, there had still remained in that region (which has undergone so many revolutions of government) any footsteps of the primitive Egyptians: Yet, it seems, the priests of those early ages were particularly careful to transmit to posterity an exact his-

tory of their kings, with memoirs of their actions; the building of the pyramids; the place of the statues; the magical mirror; the city of the black eagle; the castle of demons, seated on the brow of the mountain of the moon; the palace of adamant; with innumerable other rarities.

I tell thee, my dear Mehemet, I know not how to believe all these romantic stories. It cramps my reason to hear of a brazen tree, with iron branches and versatile hooks, to catch liars and cheats, and there detain them till they should do right to those whom they had injured. Altogether as improbable is the story of Gabdalarous, the statue set up by King Gariac.

Who can read of that monarch's being carried in the air by eagles, but may as well believe the romantic voyage of Domingo Gonsales to the moon. If thou knowest not that story, I will tell thee in short, that this was a certain Spaniard, who, in a passage to the Indies, being by shipwreck cast on shore on the island of St. Helena, with a negro, his slave, they were put to their shifts so far as to divide that unpeopled and desolate island between them, out of pure necessity, that they might both find provision enough to keep them from starving; for it seems there was great scarcity of every thing that served the uses of life.

In this condition, Necessity, the mother of cunning devices, taught them to hold correspondence with one another, though living at opposite angles of the isle, by the help of certain wild swans, which they took out of their nests very young, and brought them up, as they do pigeons at Babylon and Aleppo, to be letter-carriers.

Afterwards, as the story goes, Domingo trying several experiments on his birds, and finding all successful, at last having got four-and-twenty of them together, and

having brought them up to his lure, he scattered his cat-cats with them in the air, fastening them together with ropes and other materials; but the extravagant animals one day took wing, and carried their master to the moon, where he resided a considerable time, saw and conversed with divers inhabitants of that neighbouring globe, visited the courts of several lunar princes, and was kindly received by them all, even at the seraglio of the chief emperor, or Grand Seigneur himself: And having been presented with three stones of matchless virtue, and other rich gifts, he had his audience of conge, and came down to the earth again, where he published a journal of his travels, out of which I have extracted this short epitome, not thinking it worth the while to trouble thee with the entire relation of his ingenious whimsies:

Doubtless, there is nothing so easy, as to invent new and unheard-of fables, to amuse the credulous world, and captivate their understandings. And I have told thee this as a parallel to those monstrous fictions of Egypt; such as that of King Gancam's being carried in a pavilion on the shoulders of spirits, his magical tables, and the rest of his glorious whim-whams; and that of the Queen Borfa, who sat on a fiery throne, and lived in an enchanted castle, whose walls were full of pipes, which conveyed to her the addresses of all sorts of plaintiffs, and her decree and decision of controversies back again to them. Such another is that of Bardeair's silver tower, and his sitting before his people in the clouds of heaven; and Bedoura's sending an angel, who made such a horrible roaring, that it caused an earthquake.

Who can, without laughing, read the story of the Idol of the Test, which distinguished between harlots and virgins by the touch of their hand? or of the spirits which guard the pyramids, one like a naked woman,

walking about in the open air at noon, and making men run mad for jows of her; another in the form of an old man, with a basket on his head, and a censer in his hand; a third, of a black woman, with a monstrous child in her arms. There is no end of such fables; neither can any man of reason stoop to so much absurdity to regard them; and it is a pleasure to me, when I consider thee as a man usually satirical upon opinions and traditions repugnant to sense.

Mehemet, whilst thou art in Egypt, remember that thou wert born in Arabia, where science has flourished for these thousand years.

Paris, 28th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1655.

XII.—To ZORNESAN MUSTAPHA, *Bassa of the Sea.*

I will not pretend to divination, nor flatter thee with prognosics of better fortune against the Venetians; during thy command of the navy, than thy predecessors have had; yet I believe thou hast more honesty and valour than some of them; and I congratulate thy rise to this dignity.

If my intelligence be true, a more glorious fleet has not sailed out of the Ottoman harbours, than appears now at sea under thy command. May thy success answer the expectation of the mussulmans. But I tell thee, thou hast need to look about thee, for thou wilt encounter a valiant and subtle enemy.

These Venetians are not like the rest of the Nazarenes, superstitiously devoted to the sentiments of their priests: That kind of bigotry chains up men's spirits, and renders them effeminate; it blinds them, and robs them of their sense and native vigour: But these are bold, resolute pro-



ple, fearing neither man nor the devil; they are alſo well-versed in ſtratagems, being as cunning as ſerpents. In fine, Venice is a commonwealth made up of ſoldiers and ſtateſmen: and thou canſt not expect, that the ſea makes them degenerate; therefore look for hot entertainments whenever thou engagedſt theſe aboriginal ſarpanchins. I ſpeak not this to diſcourage thee, but to warn thee with due caution. Thou knoweſt, the ſame God, who made them made thee, and all the men in thy fleet; thou haſt alſo the happineſs to ſerve the moſt victorious empire in the world: Fear nothing, therefore; but when thou looſeſt from the Hellespont, with the invincible fleet adorned with emblems of high renown, the proſperous ſreamers of Mahomet; when thou heareſt the all-cheering chariots and timbrels, breathing the lofty menaces the vital airs of war; then let thy noble hearts flouriſh with brave thoughts, and briſk reſolutions. Yet let not a falſe aſſurance of victory make thee ruſh, and bereave thee of that conduct which is as neceſſary a qualification in a general as courage. Conſider that the fortune of battles is uncertain; therefore do all things with great precaution. Truſt not to the force of thy commiſſions in that thou fighteſt for the law and honour of the prophet; but remember the proverb of the ancients, which ſays, "The devil often carries the ſtandard of the living God." There may be thoſe in thy fleet who are treacherous, and at the devotion of the Nazarenes; for I haſe that both ſpahis and janizaries were very unwilling to embark themſelves; and God knows how far the Venetian gold may work on ſome of the officers. Though their reſentments ſeemed to be appeaſed by the bounty of our glorious ſovereign, yet the ſmalleſt occaſion may renew their old diſcontent again, and put them on more dangerous tumults at ſea than thoſe they were guilty of a-

more; or at least they will become more remiss and cold in the service of the Grand Seignior.

Be it how it will, if the navy have not good success, the blame of all will be laid on thee. Pardon therefore the freedom I take in advising thee; since it is an argument of my affection and concern for thy honour and safety, and no man can with reason be offended at another for warning him of dangers. In a word, I wish thee the good fortune of the English, who have lately taken an island in the West Indies from the Spaniards: They call it Jamaica.

It seems the King of Spain had possessed this isle from the time of the first conquests in America, where his subjects had committed horrid cruelties on the natives; for which they are now punished by that new commonwealth, who boast that they are established by God to reform or overturn all the kingdoms of Europe.

Thou hast heard, I suppose, of Oliver, the sovereign of that nation: He appears like another Jingiz Cham; setting up for a prophet and founder of a new empire. He has refused the title of King, which was offered him by the English states, with all the ensigns of royalty; but he aims at a more sublime character, laying the foundation of his hopes in a pretended modesty, assuming only the style of Protector. They say he talks of leading an army to the gates of Rome, and, when he has subdued the pope, that he will march or sail to Constantinople, and drive the Grand Seignior out of his seraglio.

I tell thee, these are not things to be contemned or laughed at; for this Oliver has the fame of a great and invincible general; and I can assure thee, all the neighbouring kings and states court his friendship. In fine, he

makes the most formidable figure at present of any prince in these western parts.

If it will divert thee at sea, to hear of the transactions by land, know, that Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, son of the German emperor, is elected King of the Romans in the room of his deceased brother. There is also a diet assembled at Frankfort, where they have too many discords and quarrels of their own, to have leisure to plot any mischief against the empire of true believers. These infidels, in their public councils, are like women fooling away the time that should be employed in action.

There arrives daily a great deal of news out of Sweden, Muscovy, and Poland. One post informs us of a plague raging at Moscow, and other cities of that northern track: Another alarms us with intelligence of sieges and plundering of towns, dispeopling of provinces, and a deluge of blood and slaughter; for the Swedes, espousing the quarrel of the Muscovites, endeavour to make their own game in Poland; many princes and great men, with their towns, villages and vassals, revolting daily from the unfortunate Casimir, and submitting to the Swedish monarch.

And here in France, those that go not to the wars make private campaigns at home: Here is nothing but duelling and murder among men of the sword; whilst the ecclesiastics are combating one another with their pens, and the lawyers with their tongues.

In Switzerland they are mad about religion. At Dantzic two eagles were seen combating in the air and, as if all Nature were in a ferment, the winds have been at variance in the bowels of the earth, which has occasioned frequent earthquakes in the parts of Germany. The King of Poland's brother is dead, and the Queen-mother of Sweden.

We must all die at the determined hour; and there is no other terror in death but what is created by our own opinion, nor any greater pain than attending our birth; for at our dissolution every element of which we were compounded takes its proper share; and that which is divine in us, returns to that which is divine in the universe.

Paris, 28th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1655.

XIII.—*To PESTELI HALI, his Brother, Master of the Customs at Constantinople.*

OUR kinsman Ifouf is now gone for Muscovy, having visited the most remarkable places in this kingdom. I received a letter from him, dated at Dieppe, a sea-town over against the English coast. He was just going aboard, as he tells me, when he delivered his dispatch to the post. God grant him a prosperous voyage to that region, and whithersoever his genius or fortune carries him.

I am extremely pleased with his conversation. Whilst he was in Paris, I was never sensible of melancholy, unless it were in the evenings, which forced us to part company. He has an excellent memory, and recounts all the adventures of his life with a great deal of ease, both to himself and his hearers. He never was at a loss for matter, or confounded one circumstance with another, but, ranking every thing in its due time and place, delivered all with a clearness and grace which affected me with singular delight.

Besides, he has a ready wit, lively fancy, and judgment enough for one of his years. I tell thee, the relations he has made of his travels, with his regular deportment here in Paris, of which I have been a witness, have

imprinted in me, such an opinion of his abilities, that I have trusted him with some particular instructions, in order to a settled correspondence between us, in whatsoever court he resides: for, in a word, I find him mature enough for business of moment; and it is pity his parts should be buried, without ever appearing in action.

If he succeeds in what I have put him upon, when he arrives at Archangel, a sea-port of Russia, and a place of great commerce and traffic, I shall have good reason to hope for more important matters when he comes to Moscow, the chief city of the men who worship the eyes of their emperor: And then it will be time to give a due character of him to the ministers of the Porte, wherein thou wilt have many opportunities to perform the office of a kinsman and friend. Those of the same blood ought thus to serve one another with integrity and affection; for in so doing, we help ourselves, strengthen the interest of our family, and shall find returns in time of need. As thou hast received favour from Kerker Hassan Bassa, on the score of being his countryman, so there is greater reason that thou shouldst show kindness to Isouf, who partakes of our blood.

There arises a vast complacency from doing good offices, though to a stranger, or even to an enemy. Man is naturally generous; and he has debauched his soul who acts contrary to this principle. Yet the greatest part of men are degenerated; they pursue lions, tygers, bears, and such like ravenous beasts, with inexorable hatred and revenge; they bear secret antipathies against spiders, toads, serpents, and other venomous creatures; and yet they are all these things, or worse, themselves. Ever since Astræa abandoned the earth, there has been a strange metamorphosis in our race; men have, for the most part, forsaken their humanity, and changed nature

with the sciences, nay, we transact them in whatsoever is cruel and vicious; as if our reason were given us only to teach us the most refined methods of impiety, and to be a more exquisite spur to vice.

Ifouf has presented me with solid observations of this kind in his travels, especially in Africa. He says, that region is not more prolific of strange and horrible beasts, than it is of monstrous men, brutes, and devils in human shape. And though he relates some fair things of the Indians, and other people in Asia, yet they are intermixed with tragical reports and mournful memoirs, such as stain the history of our race, and make it evident that it is hard to meet with one good man among ten thousand. The whole world is over-run with oppression, cruelty, avarice, perfidy and lust.

He relates strange things of the antiquities of Egypt: He calls it the only scene of wonders and miracles on earth. Indeed this country was ever famous among all nations for the wisdom and learning of her priests, who, in the first ages of the world, understood all the secrets of the elements, the virtue of plants and minerals, and were perfectly versed in the science of the stars and spirits, and in all manner of mysterious knowledge; they were said to make statues and images that could speak, walk, run, and counterfeit all human actions; they were also exquisite in making miraculous talismans and mirrors, with any kind of magical work, whereby they kept the people, and even the princes, in profound awe and veneration of their prodigious knowledge and power, and likewise defended their country against all invaders; for no sooner did an enemy appear with his armies on the frontiers of Egypt, but these priests had present intimation of it by their secret art; even in their chambers, perhaps at an hundred leagues distance; then, by their

enchancements, they either caused fire to consume them in their camps, or turned their swords against each other, or sent an army of winged serpents to destroy them; so that for many ages no king ever prospered that fought against the Egyptians.

But let not thou and I, dear brother, suffer our reason to degenerate, by giving credit to fictions and romances, though vouched by some of our countrymen, such as Morat Alzman, Eb'n Abdalholm, and others.

He also tells many remarkable passages of the pyramids of Cairo, the overflowing of the Nile, the mummies, and other things, which I have not now time to rehearse; but in another letter I will gratify thee with a more ample account of his observations.

In the mean time, live thou to enjoy the fruits of thy own travels in the East, which, if it matches not the South in prodigies and stupendous inventions, yet it surpasses both it and all the rest of the world in justice and morality.

Paris, 17th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1655.

XIV.—To ISMAEL KAIDAR, CHEIK, a Man of the Law.

THOU hast the character and fame of a great historian, a man of intelligence both in the records of past times, and the transactions of the present; therefore the name of Christina, late Queen of Sweden, cannot be strange to thee. I doubt not but thou hast heard of this princess, so celebrated throughout the earth for her learning and other noble accomplishments, and how she voluntarily resigned the crown to one of her kinsmen; but, perhaps, thou knowest not the true motives which induced her to

this royal caprice, for it deserves no better name, as thou wilt understand by the sequel.

Her father, who, for his successful wars and perpetual victories, was called the Great Gustave, dying, left her in the entire possession of his kingdom and new conquests in Germany; but during the time of her reign, Pimentelli, the Spanish ambassador at Stockholm, by daily conversing with this great queen, used such plausible insinuations, as to prevail on her to have a more favourable opinion of the pope, and his religion, than she had before entertained; for all the Swedes are educated in an aversion for those of the Roman faith. I need not explain to thee these distinctions of belief among the Nazarenes; thou art versed in their history as well as in our own; suffice it to say, that this ambassador possessed Christina with so fair an idea of the Catholic religion, that she abandoned her crown, and has ever since been a queen-errant, a royal Rambler through Europe, being resolved to make experiment of the generosity of Catholic princes, whose virtues Pimentelli had so highly extolled.

It would be a work of seven moons, for the most industrious scribe to relate all the particular magnificences with which she has been entertained in her travels through Germany, Flanders, Alsace, Inspruck, Italy, and Rome, where she now resides. Every prince of the Roman church, through whose territories she passed, was ambitious to appear prodigal of his favours and civilities to their illustrious stranger; perhaps, to evade the lashes of her wit, which, they say, is very satirical; or it may be for other reasons more forcible and poignant. Be it how it will, the Roman wits have not spared her, as thou wilt perceive by the following verses, which, on the first day of the moon of January, were found in the hand of Pas-



quin, and on the portal of the palace Ternefe, where ſhe refides :

Pazza, Gobba, et Zoppa viene dal Norte,  
 Del Monarcha Invitto l' indegna Figlia,  
 Mentre Pologna Gente et ſi Scompiglia,  
 A vane Pompe Roma apre le Porte ;  
 Contra queſti Applauſi l' ungrida forte,  
 Et in baſſe Note l' altro bis Biglia,  
 Corre la Sciocca Genti, alza le ciglia,  
 Ride Paſquin del Papa, et della Corte.  
 Su ſu venite voi Ruffiani Snelli,  
 Et portate a Chriſtina 'ſtravagante,  
 Di venire il Scttro ne i Pazzarelli :  
 Vuol parar dotta, et è rozza Pedante,  
 E in Braccio a mangiator di Ravanelli  
 Vuol parer caſta, et è Putana Errante.

I ſend thee theſe verſes in the original, knowing thou art a critic in the Italian language ; beſides they will not found ſo well in Arabic. Thou that haſt been in Rome, knoweſt what Paſquin is, and art no ſtranger to the humours of that city.

Let not lampoons of moroſe Italians abate thy charity for this renowned princeſs, but let her extravagancies be an argument of the greatneſs of her ſoul ; and remember the old Roman proverb, which ſays, “ There is no furpaſſing genius, without ſome mixture of madneſs.”

Paris, 30th of the 1ſt Moon, of the Year 1656.

XV.—*To the ſame.*

HAVING the ſpace of an hour before the poſt goes, I could not forbear to inform thee of a new ſtar which lately appeared in theſe parts, moving in a direct line

from east to north. The astronomers have made accurate observations of it, and yet are at a loss what to conclude. Some say it is below the moon; others place it in the sphere of the fixed stars; one will have it a meteor; a second affirms it to be a planet; whilst the Jews report every where, that it is the star of Jacob, and a sign that their Messias is at hand.

Nathan Ben Saddi, one of that nation at Vienna, sends me strange stories concerning the prodigies which shall go before, and accompany the appearance of the deliverer of Israel, as he calls him.

He says, there shall speedily come a sort of people from the uttermost parts of the earth, of a black and horrible aspect, so that whoever shall but cast an eye on any of them shall immediately die, as by the glance of a basilisk; for every one of them shall have two heads and seven eyes, glowing and sending forth sparks of fire as poisonous as the flashes of the wind El-Samiel in Arabia. They shall also be swift as stags. And about the same time, an extraordinary heat shall flow from the sun, which being dispersed through the elements, shall corrupt the air, earth, and waters, and infect all this lower world with such pestilential qualities, that a million of Gentiles (for so the Jews call all that are not of their own nation) shall die every day; and men shall be in so great consternation, that they shall run up and down the streets, crying; "Wo, wo to us and our children!" They shall dig their own graves, and go down into them of their own accord, expecting death; but that all this time, the Jews shall be in safety and in health.

This Hebrew adds, that the light of the sun shall be totally extinguished for the space of thirty days; during which horrible darkness, the Christians and Mahometans shall acknowledge their errors, and many of them shall

embrace the law of Moses ; for which God, being moved to mercy, will restore that planet again to its former brightness.

But what he says next is an unhappy presage to the Romans, whose empire, according to this tradition, shall be extended over all the regions of the earth for the space of nine moons ; after which term, God shall send the first Messias, the son of Joseph, who shall gather the dispersed tribes of Israel, and conduct them to Jerusalem ; from whence he shall issue forth, with a victorious army, and lay waste the Roman empire, sack Rome itself, and carry away the immense riches of the Christians to Jerusalem ; and the very fear of him shall reduce all nations to his obedience : He shall fight with Armillai Haraseha, the antichrist of the Christians, and shall destroy two hundred thousand of Armillai's followers, but in the end shall be slain himself, and the good angels shall transport his body to the apartment of the fathers.

The Jews hold, that this Armillai shall spring out of an image of the Virgin Mary in Rome, made of marble, with which the most wicked and profligate among men shall be enamoured, and commit the most execrable uncleannesses that can be named ; The result of these adulterous congresses shall be, that the statue, by a supernatural power, shall prove impregnate ; and cleaving asunder, shall be delivered of this young antichrist, who is to vex and persecute the Jews, and afflict them with greater calamities than either they or their fathers felt since the beginning of the world : They shall be forced to flee into the deserts, and hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth, living only on the grass and herbage, with the leaves of trees, till the great Michael, the archangel, shall thrice wind his horn ; then shall the second Messias, the son of David, with Elias the prophet, appear, who

shall rescue them out of all their troubles, and lead them triumphant to paradise.

This is the sum of what Nathan and all the Jews believe concerning the last times, which they say are now approaching, as is evident by the rising of this new star, accompanied with terrible thunders and lightnings. And the chief patriarch, or prince of the Jews, is come from Jerusalem to Vienna, to prepare those of his nation in these western parts, for the grand revolutions which they believe are ready to fall out in the world. All the Jews in that city went out a league to meet him, with great pomp and solemnity.

In the mean while, I hear that the son of the late Visier Azem makes a confusion among you at Constantinople, and the parts adjacent, being at the head of fifty thousand men, on pretence to revenge the death of his father, but really to recover his ravished mistress, the fair Sultana Zamiouvre, who was forced from his seraglio by the Grand Seignior's command. Women and wine, according to the proverb of the Franks, make all the disturbance in the world; and without calling to remembrance the Trojan wars, the unhappy effects of Helena's perfidy, we may conclude, that women are the occasions of many quarrels among us.

There is a peace lately concluded between the French and the new English commonwealth; by which means the exiled king of the Scots was forced to depart from this realm, which has been his sanctuary for many years. He went away at the beginning of the treaty, and has wandered up and down Germany ever since, sometimes keeping a court like a king, at other times living incognito, and very privately, with only two or three attendants. That poor prince is very unfortunate; yet they say he bears his calamity with singular moderation, and a

certain royal stiffness of mind, which will rather break than bend.

This pope is a great peace-maker, and has sent nuncios with letters to all the princes of Christendom within the pale of the Roman church, earnestly persuading them to unity and friendship, that so their arms may be turned against the mussulmans. His predecessor was of another sentiment, and would not intermeddle in the quarrels of any. One day, as he was looking out of a window of his palace with some cardinals, they espied two men fighting in the street, whereupon they desired the holy father to interpose his authority, and command peace; but he refused, saying, "Let them fight it out, and then they will be good friends of course." And turning to the Spanish ambassador, he said, "So will it fare with your master and the King of France; when they have sufficiently wearied out one another with wars, they will gladly embrace the proposals of peace."

Here is great rejoicing for the reconciliation newly made between the king and his uncle, the Duke of Orleans, who have been estranged a long time, the latter having espoused the Prince of Conde's cause; but now he has abandoned it, and is come to the court.

These infidels are as inconstant as the winds, which vary to all the points of the compass.

Paris, 30th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1656.

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XVI.—*To SOLYMAN, his Cousin, at Scutari.*

I SEE thou art given over to a spirit of discontent: Nothing can please thee: Thou murmurest at Providence, and castest obloquies on the ways of God, as if the order

of all things, and the established economy of the universe, must be changed to gratify thy humour.

Formerly thou wert troubled with dull, melancholy thoughts about religion; now thou art angry with thy trade, and pinest that thou wert not educated in the academy. A mechanic life, thou sayest, is tedious and irksome, besides that it is beneath one of thy blood to be always employed in making of turbans; thou wishest rather to have been a courtier, soldier, or any thing save what thou art.

Cousin, let not pride and ambition corrupt thy manners. Dost thou not consider that all true believers are obliged to exercise some manual occupation, and that the Sultan himself is not exempted from this duty? Did not the Prophet himself practise it, and enjoin it to all his followers? Hast thou not heard of his words, when he said, "No man can eat any thing sweeter in this world than what is acquired by his own labour." Doubtless all the prophets and holy men have gained their bread by their lawful employments: Adam was a gardener, Abel a shepherd, Seth a weaver, Enoch a tailor, Noah a shipwright, Moses, Saguib, and Mahomet, were shepherds; Jesus the son of Mary, a carpenter, Abubecre, Omar, Othman, Gali, and Gabdorachaman, were merchants.

Dost thou esteem thyself of better blood than Adam, from whom thou receivedst thine? For shame! prefer not thyself to Noah, the restorer of mankind, to Jesus the Messias, to Mahomet our holy lawgiver, and to the rest of those excellent persons, who thought it no contempt to work at their several trades, and eat the bread of their own labour.

Besides, dost thou consider the dangerous intrigues of a prince's court? Art thou sufficiently armed with wit

and dexterity to secure thy station against the wily trains of designing men? I do not reproach thy abilities; yet I think thou wilt do better in the post allotted thee by destiny, that is, in thy proper calling, than in the perilous condition of those who stand or fall at the pleasure of others; whereas thou art now thy own man, and needest fear no tempests of state, or frowns of thy prince, so long as thou pursuest none but thy private affairs. Many sovereign monarchs have envied such as thee, when they have seen how cheerfully and quietly they pass away their time under the umbrella of an obscure and private life; whereas, at the court there is nothing but intriguing, plotting, and treachery, one undermining another to make way for their own advance. The court is a perfect theatre of fraud, dissimulation, envy, malice, and a thousand vices, which there act their various parts under the habit and disguise of seeming virtues. There a man must flatter the great, and speak against his own sense and the truth, to procure the favour of some dignified soul; than which nothing is more ignoble and base.

This puts me in mind of a pleasant repartee which Diogenes the philosopher gave to a courtier: The spark, passing by Diogenes as he sat in a tub eating of turnips, put this scoff upon him; "Diogenes, (said he) if thou wouldst but learn the art of flattery, thou needest not sit here in a tub scranching of roots." To whom the philosopher replied; "And thou vain-glorious man, if thou wouldst but learn to live contented with my homely fare, needest not condescend to the fawning of a spaniel."

But, cousin, let not this passage cause thee to emulate the philosopher's manner of life, for he had his vices as well as other men. If he was no flatterer, yet he was proud and opiniative; he laid trains for the applause of

men in all his actions, and so taught others to become flatterers, though he was none himself. All his pretended humility, mortification, and rigour, were but so many decoys for fame. Of this Plato was sensible, who was a far more excellent philosopher than he. As this sage was one day walking with some of his friends in the fields, they showed him Diogenes standing up to the chin in water, whose superficies was frozen over, save one hole that Diogenes had made for himself: "Puh, (says Plato) do not regard him, and he will soon be out; for had he not seen us coming this way, he would not have put himself to this pain." Another time this philosopher came to Plato's house, and as he walked on the rich carpets, with which the floor of the hall was covered; "See (said Diogenes) how I trample on Plato's pride." "Yes, (said Plato) but with greater pride."

Certainly the greatest philosophers, doctors, and even saints themselves, have their errors and failings. Do not therefore affect to change thy calling for the life of a student or a contemplative man; for the same discontent will still haunt thee in that state which makes thee so uneasy now. Thou art a perfect stranger to the intolerable anguish of mind which afflicts thinking men, and such as apply themselves to the study of the sciences: They labour under a perpetual thirst of knowledge, and the more they learn, the greater and more ardent is their desire of farther discoveries; so that the most accomplished sages are no more satisfied with their own acquisitions than he who has never meddled with books.

Then, as to their bodies, they are always vexed with one malady or other, proceeding from the violent agitation of their spirits, the intenseness of their thoughts, perpetual poring upon books, and their sedentary life.

In all that I have said I do not dissuade thee from seek-



ing after knowledge; I rather counsel thee to read books, and I gave thee the same advice in a former letter; but do it with moderation; let not thy studies intrude on the affairs of thy calling; read histories or other tracts, according to thy fancy, when thou hast nothing else to do; but do not follow it so close as if thou aspiredst to the character of a complete historian or philosopher: Still remember that thou art a turban-maker, and that by the decrees of fate thou art born for this business. Follow it with alacrity and mirth. When thou art at thy work, it will be pleasant meditating on what thou hast read at thy spare hours. Thou wilt find thyself much more happy in thus mixing studies with the necessary offices of thy trade, than in abandoning thyself wholly to a contemplative life: And in the midst of thy disgusts thou mayest comfort thyself with this reflection, that thou art of none of the most despicable callings which serve the necessities of man's body. Had thy employment been only to make papouches or sandals which cover the feet, it might have been an argument of discontent to thee, in regard the foot is the most contemptible member of the body; but now thou passest thy time in making ornaments for the head, which is the noblest part, and commander of all the rest, thou hast no reason to repine.

If after all thou resolvest to change thy course of life, I advise thee to turn soldier, for then thou must be contented and patient persevere.

Paris, 13th of the 4th Moon, of the Year 1656.

## XVII.—70 MELEC AMET.

THE Nazarenes boast much of the new converts they have made from the Mussulman law to the faith of Jesus the Son of Mary. On the 23d of the last moon, a Moor of Tripoli was baptized in a church of this city, and the next day he was anointed with their chrism, or holy oil, (as they call it) which they say has a virtue to confirm and strengthen him in his new religion. On the 25th he was clothed all in white linen, and walked in procession through the streets, with music playing before them, whilst the ground was strewed with flowers. When he arrived at the great mosque of this city, a priest gave him that which they esteem the body of the Messias, but, in reality, is only a wafer, with the figure of a man crucified on it. These wafers are made and sold to the priests by the common bakers of the town, and yet they make the poor ignorant people believe with four words they can change them into an immortal God.

The renegade Moor appears very zealous and devout, frequenting the temples, and visiting all holy places. He walks along the streets with beads in his hands, which the people interpret as an argument of his piety to the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus; for when they pray to her, it is the custom to number their orisons on beads. But all this while they consider not that he may be an hypocrite as to their religion, and, instead of addressing his prayers to her, may direct them to God alone, as all the true faithful do who use beads in rehearsing the divine ejaculations, as well as the Christians in repeating their Ave Maria, which they say was the salutation that Gabriel gave the Virgin when he entered her oratory.

Be it how it will, he gets abundance of money by his devotion; for the Franks are really very charitable, and

give plentiful alms to the poor; but especially to one under his circumstances they are extremely liberal, that so they may imprint in him a more fervent affection, and profound reverence for their religion.

But he is not the only convert they brag of; many captives they either wheedle or force to turn Christians. Thus, he that was taken at sea by the ships of Malta twelve years ago, when it was reported through Christendom that he was the Grand Seignior's son, is of late turned Christian and friar, having solemnly, and in public, abjured the mussulman law; cursed our holy Prophet, and all those of his race; with the believers of the Alcoran. He is like to come to great preferment in the Roman church: They call him the Ottoman Father; and boast, that the true heir of the Turkish empire is a Christian, and in their custody.

Yet, after all, the proselyte of greatest fame is Don Philipppo, the son of the Dey of Tunis, of whom I made mention in one of my former letters. This prince is now at Valentia, under the King of Spain's jurisdiction, who allows him a considerable pension, and has given him leave to marry a princess of that country, very beautiful and ingenious, but of a poor fortune: He has one son by her; and it is said the King of Spain designs to set forth a mighty fleet of ships, and, having furnished this prince with all things necessary for a warlike expedition, will send him thus equipped to claim the government of Tunis; or, in case of denial, to make a descent in that kingdom, and fight for it. But I believe this will only prove a Spanish rhodomantade; that monarch having work enough cut out for him in Europe and America by the French and English, to divert him from any such wild enterprise on Afric. However it be, this Don Philipppo is much talked of in Christendom,

and the Spaniards flatter themselves with the hopes of conquering a great part of Barbary by his means, he having many friends and a considerable interest in those parts.

Thou mayest acquaint the divan, that Osman the dwarf is still living, and serves the Porte with a secret and untainted zeal. Two days ago he discovered a cunning practice of Cardinal Mazarini, whose motions and intrigues he watches very narrowly. He assures me that this minister has dispatched away two agents to the King of Sweden and Elector of Brandenburg, with a letter to each of these princes from the King of France, also with blank papers and the king's seal, giving them instructions to fill up those blanks, and seal them with the king's signet, according as they found the treaty go forward between those princes. The main design of this trick being to hinder them from entering into a league against the King of Poland, by all the artifice these agents could use, in exactly timing and suiting their counterfeited letters to the difficulties and misunderstandings that always happen in such treaties, that so they may exasperate each party against the other as occasion offered, without being obliged to send to France for fresh letters, which would breed too much delay, and spoil their design.

By this thou mayest perceive that Cardinal Mazarini comes not short of his predecessor Richieu, in managing the affairs of foreign courts. He is the very soul of all the grand-business in Christendom.

A general heart-burning has possessed the French, especially the inhabitants of Paris, ever since the conclusion of the last year, when the king issued out certain orders, commanding that all the gold and silver money in the kingdom should be brought into his mint to be new-

coined. The merchants first complained of this edict, and then it was murmured at by all the trading people; at length the parliament of Paris took it into their consideration, and opposed the king's pleasure; upon which he banished eight of their members, and has several times prohibited them to assemble; yet they persisted to meet till he banished more of them, which, instead of awing them into the expected compliance, has but incensed them more; and the discontented clergy blow up the coals, as do likewise the friends of the Prince of Conde. The parliament are very bold and peremptory in their proceedings, having expressly forbid the citizens of Paris to obey the king's order, and decreed that nothing shall be done in their assembly till the banished senators be recalled.

Things being at this pass, we expect nothing but insurrections, massacres, and other effects of popular fury. The rich are laying in vast quantities of corn and other provisions, as if they expected a siege; and the poor fare the better for it, whilst great largesses are given among them by the grandees of the parliament, to engage them in the faction. Besides, thou knowest, the multitude always delight in novelty and state tempests, hoping for plunder, and to enrich themselves by the ruin of others.

I know not what conduct is fittest for me to use in this case; whether it will be best for me to abide in this city, or follow the court, which is now at La Fere in Picardy; or whether I should retire to some other place less liable to civil disturbances. I wish the ministers of the Porte would send me full instructions what I ought to do in these emergencies.

From Rome we hear that the pope and cardinals are in great consternation, on some intelligence they have re-

ceived, that the English intend to make a descent on the territories of the church. That nation is now become the great bugbear of all Europe, since they have moulded themselves into a commonwealth.

Every kingdom and empire has a time to rise and another to fall. But who can determine the period wherein the Ottoman glory will decline, which is not yet advanced to its zenith?

Paris, 27th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1656.

XVIII.—*To SEDREE AL' GIRAW'N, Chief Treasurer to the Grand Seignior.*

THY virtues have at length raised thee to a glorious trust, the charge of immense wealth. Thou hast in thy custody the riches which cannot be matched in the universe. God inspire thee with graces suitable to a dignity so full of temptations. I hope thou wilt not be affronted at my prayer, as was thy predecessor Kienan Bassa at some counsels of like nature, which I gave him in a letter. Some men are strangely choleric, and look on those as enemies who give them good advice. I only warned him of the ordinary cheats that are practised at certain times in the treasury, which thou knowest to be true as well as I; and I tell thee farther, he himself was suspected by many in the seraglio not to have been altogether exempt from guilt.

Whether he were or not, I performed but my duty in giving him necessary cautions; for such is the will of my superiors that I should not be afraid to unravel the secrets of those who are false to the Grand Seignior. I did not charge him with such a crime, and therefore he had no reason to be angry; but some men will pick a

quarrel with their own shadows. In a word, this grandee forgot himself.

In saying so, I do not reflect on his original, or that he was found sleeping on a dunghill in Russia, a poor ragged infant, when the Tartars took him captive, among many thousands of others, in the plunder of Tsnarow, and sold him to the Capa Agasi for thirteen piaſtres, by reason of his beauty. I do not call to mind the circumstances of his youth, since it is common for the meanest slaves to arrive at an extraordinary grandeur by their merits, or at least through the favour of the Sultan.

But what I aim at is, that in his being disgusted at the remonstrances I made of some private and sinister practices in the treasury, he forgot that he himself is still a slave to the Grand Seignior as well as I, and therefore not above instruction.

Well, it seems he is now made captain bafsa, and thou succeedest him in the office of treasurer. To him I wish all imaginable success and victories at sea, for the sake of our great master and the mussulman empire; to thee, for thy own sake, and for my brother's, whom I know thou wilt ever respect as a friend, I wish increase of riches and honours, even as thy merits and services augment in the esteem of the Sultan, and of all the world.

And I tell thee, I have far livelier hopes to see this latter wish take effect than the former; for what reason have we to expect better luck from the courage or conduct of this Ouroua Kienan, than from the brave Zornefan Mustapha who commanded the fleet last year?

This unhappy thought has put me into as melancholy a humour as *Aeneas* was in, when the Queen of Carthage required an account of the Trojan wars; for I have heard that Cara Mustapha Bafsa succeeded Zornefan in the command of the fleet, and in the revolution of a

moon, was made manfoul again for the fake of Kieman Bassa, or rather for the fake of the licentious soldiers, who, it seems, command all things. I have been informed also of all the other tragedies acted at the *feraglio* since the second moon of this year; neither are the causes and origin of so much slaughter and bloodshed hid from me. It is too appatent that there is an universal disorder and corruption in the discipline of the janizaries.

I formerly wrote to the Kiaya Bey on this account; but it seems avarice, the root of all evil, had rendered him insensible and obdurate.

Is it not a shame that the pay of those who serve the Grand Signior in the wars should be detained not three or four moons, but five or six years, by their corrupt officers? They sit at home enjoying their ease, revelling in taverns, and committing a thousand riots; whilst the others undergo numberless fatigues abroad, and are reduced to the extremest necessities, not having so much as the vests allowed them by the Sultan to cover their nakedness! And if they complain of their sufferings, instead of redress, they meet with nothing but taunts and reproaches, as if they were not worthy to eat the Sultan's bread and salt, though they freely hazard their lives for him. It is no wonder the janizaries are so unbridled in their rage after so many provocations.

Yet I cannot but lament the fate of those unfortunate men who were sacrificed to the fury of that insolent militia; especially I condole the loss of the brave Solyman Kyalik Aga. The janizaries had an old grudge against him ever since his hot dispute with the Bostangi Bassa, and now they were resolved to execute their revenge.

As for the Kiaya Bey, it seems to be a stroke of divine justice, that he, who had been the cause of all this



mutiny, should in remorse strangle himself, and so go to hell as an expiation for the many lives he had cast away.

And there is little left to be said in respect of the musti, who was the chief of those who betrayed their master, Sultan Ibrahim. To tell thee my true resentments, I am heartily sorry for all the rest; but to those who were concerned in that treason there seems no pity due; and the musti may thank God and his good stars, that his life went not with the others. They report here he is fled into Egypt.

But what was that Gelep Assa who headed this rabble of mutineers? I have heard nothing of him before the intelligence I received of his sudden rise, and equally precipitate fall, during this tumult. He was, I suppose, some passionate fool, of an ill-contrived midriff, which used to make a quarrel between his heart and his spleen; and from this intestine broil he habitually learned the way to set people together by the ears; a popular man, an incendiary, and one that knew how to wheedle the vulgar to his own ruin. Who can give an account of these things? or who can unravel the web of destiny? Though there is nothing strange in his particular case, yet in the general it is prodigious, that such little instruments should be able to give so terrible a shock to the frame of an ancient and mighty government.

He was a man of no fame or character, and yet for the space of two moons he may be said to command the greatest sovereign in the world, sole proprietor of fame and honour; and had he pushed on his interest, it is not improbable but that he might have exalted himself above his master, and secured his post against all after-claps; for, according to my intelligence, he had, during the sedition, heaped together prodigious sums of money, the presents of bassas, and other ministers of the Porte, who

all adored this new-rising comet, and sought his protection and favour against the barbarous rabble. But it seems he was infatuated with too much glory, and considered not that every body watched all opportunities and occasions to ruin him; and that his very followers would be the first to betray him as soon as the hurry of their insurrection was over. This generally happens to all ringleaders of parties; when once the spirits of a faction are spent, the lees (which consist of regret and confusion) are discharged on those who first fermented them, mixed with the revenge of the state.

There are abundance of great and brave men gone; but the old Negidher was of their council, and he brought them to ruin, as he did the Coreis of Mecca, when they conspired against the life of the Prophet. This devil entered the temple, where they were assembled, in the shape of an ancient man, decrepid, and leaning on a crutch; and when he was commanded to withdraw, he told them, "He was a senior, who had seen all ages, and remarked the occurrences of times; that he was expert in unfolding secrets, and rendering difficult things easy." In a word, he used so many plausible insinuations, that they admitted him into their assembly: But none of their counsels prospered.

That malicious demon is often present in the cabals of seditious men; and though they see him not, yet he secretly undermines their plots, and brings them to shame and punishment: For he is the spirit of envy; and though he be himself a rebel, and the ringleader of a faction in the kingdom of the air, yet such is his spiteful nature, that he seldom suffers any rebellion to thrive on earth; not for any love that he bears to government, but because he delights to be active in mischief, he it

where it will; and the guardian spirits will not suffer him to mix with the established divans of an empire.

The all-good God preserve thee from the malice of wicked demons that always hover about treasures of gold and silver.

Paris, 22d of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1656.

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XIX.—*To the same.*

THE troubles of the Sublime Porte touched me so nearly, and embarked my soul in such a tempest of solicitous thoughts and anxieties for the honour and safety of the Osman empire, that I had no leisure to think of my own particular hazards whilst I was writing the other letter; yet I have been engulfed in abundance, of vexatious circumstances and perilous accidents.

It generally happens, that when one misfortune befalls a man, it brings a train along with it; so that at some seasons we seem to be besieged with evils, or at least so closely blocked up by an army of calamities, that there is no passage left open either for relief or intelligence.

So has it fared with me of late, and with thousands of others, I doubt not, in this populous city. The rebellion of the Prince of Condé is the occasion of all this; for the king having some reasons to apprehend a secret conspiracy of the prince's friends and well-wishers in Paris, and other places, has caused a very severe scrutiny to be made of all strangers and sojourners. The soubahs, or officers, go to every house within their precinct, taking down the names of all the inhabitants in writing, and seizing the persons of those whom they suspect: The prisons are filled with people of all ranks, and the nobles are sent to the Castle of the Wood of Vincennes. It is

said the king has a list of many thousands of Conde's party in Paris, who designed, on a prefixed day, to take up arms for that prince, and that their example would have been followed all over the kingdom.

God knows what is in the hearts of these infidels: I am sure Mahmut is wholly a stranger to their plots: Though last year I received certain instructions from the Visier Azem, commanding me to act secretly in the Prince of Conde's behalf to abet the faction, and use all the endeavours and art I could to raise a new party for him among the courtiers: But I waded so dangerous an employment, by proposing to him the vast expences it would require, and the necessity of sending some extraordinary embassy to this court to countenance the business. To tell thee the truth, I esteemed it a thing impracticable, and a mere caprice of that active bassa, who had a natural kindness for rebels, and delighted to have a hand in difficult undertakings, whether there was any likelihood of success or not.

But he is dead, and let that atone for all his rebellions when he had the command of Aleppo. I love not to load the departed souls with accusations; what I have to say is in my own vindication, who could not approve his politic chimera. In regard had it succeeded, no profit or advantage would from thence arise to the Ottoman empire; and had it been discovered, not only I and all the secrets of my commission would have been laid open to the infidels, but also it would have been an eternal dishonour and blemish to the high resplendent Porte, to be found guilty of violating, in so notorious a manner, the faith it had given to the most ancient and puissant monarchy among the Nazarenes.

Besides, I know not but this minister had a private grudge against me for accusing him formerly to the di-

van, when he held correspondence with the Venetians; and that he studied this way to be revenged, by employing me in an affair which must needs be my ruin. However, I think I had reason to be cautious and apprehensive of the work: This made me dispatch to him a letter, full of specious umbrages, seeming to approve his design, but entangling it with such difficulties as would divert him from farther thoughts of it.

Yet, after all, I have been really brought into danger, on the bare suspicion of being concerned on the Prince of Condé's side; by which thou mayest guess at the consequence had I hearkened to the visier's advice.

One morning early, the officers appointed for this purpose entered my chamber; and having demanded my name, business, and quality, I answered, "My name was Titus Durlach Nielki; but that for shortness, and to denote my country, I was commonly called Titus the Moldavian; and that by this name I was well known to Cardinal Mazarini, as I had been to his predecessor Richlieu, and other courtiers of great quality. I told them likewise that I was a clerk, who understood some foreign languages, and therefore had been often employed by those cardinals in translating books out of Greek and Arabic into Latin and French; for which reason, being recommended by Cardinal Richlieu, I had been introduced into the acquaintance of several nobles, whose children I taught those languages; and that some of them had promised to make me curate of St. Stephen's church as soon as it was vacant."

They seemed to be very well satisfied with what I said, but told me moreover, they had a commission to search my lodgings for arms and treasonable papers.

It is impossible to express the horror I was in when I saw them go roundly to work, prying into every corner,

and searching my trunks, coffers, and even my bed itself. Not that I had any guilt upon me of concealing either arms or papers relating to this conspiracy, but my concern was for my box of letters to the ministers of the Porte. As for arms, they found no other but an old sword, which I told them I travelled with out of my own country, and a brace of pistols for the same use, to defend me from robbers, assassins, and other injuries.

These fellows seemed mightily pleased with the curious workmanship of my weapons, surveyed them all over, and having drawn my sword out of the scabbard, and made a pass or two with it against the wall, after the French mode of fencing, they put it up again, telling me, "They had no authority to take these arms from me, since they were necessary for my defence." But when they came to my box of letters, and saw them written in strange characters, which none of them could read, they began to look on one another, and change their countenances, as if there were some dangerous matter contained in these papers, and therefore written in cyphers.

They went aside to one end of the chamber, whispering together, and nodding their heads, with all the symptoms of jealousy. At length, I, interrupting them, said, "You need not, gentlemen, be concerned about these papers; they were left with me by a merchant Jew of my acquaintance, and they are letters of correspondence between him and some of his brethren at Rome, Venice, Amsterdam, and other places in Europe. It is therefore they are written in a character which to you appears strange, it being Hebrew, the national language of the Jews. They contain only matters of traffic, being letters of mart and exchange; for you know the Jews are the greatest merchants, brokers, and bankers in the world."

These words, with some gold which I gave them, dispersed all their suspicions, cleared up their cloudy brows, and turned their frowns into smiles and complimentary addresses. They told me, "I was a very honest man, and they would do me what service they could." So bid me adieu.

By this thou mayest see the mighty power of that charming metal which commands all things, for whatever I could have said without that had been insignificant. But these idolators melted into an indifference at the first sight of the glittering pistoles; and when I had once rendered them thus ductile, it was easier to frame them to the most devout appearance of respect and friendship. They promised and swore no hurt should be done me.

But I knew the feckleness of human fidelity better than to repose any great confidence in these mens words. As soon as they were gone, I conveyed my letters to Eliachim, who could easily conceal them in any private corner of his house, desiring him to furnish me with some letters of indifferent concerns written in Hebrew, that if these searchers should come again, and demand a second view of my box, perhaps with design to carry it to some minister of state, I might have those Hebrew dispatches ready to show, which being put in the same box, would not be known from the other by such ignorant fellows; to whom Hebrew, Arabic, and Chinese, were all alike, and so I should be acquitted from all future trouble of this nature.

And the event answered my expectation; for within three days the same men came again, with others in their company, pretending they had fresh warrants, and were sworn to be impartial. Wherefore I was forced to attend them, whilst they carried both me and my box before a *cadi*, or judge, who having examined me very

strictly concerning my name, country, religion, and other matters, and seeming well satisfied with all my answers, at last sent for a priest well versed in the Hebrew tongue, ordering him to peruse the letters; which when he had done, he assured the *cadi* that there was not a word in any of them relating to the state, being purely matters of private contracts and bargains between merchant-correspondents, with bills of lading, &c. So I had my box of sham letters restored to me again, and was honourably dismissed.

Yet though this storm was soon blown over, I was very near running on rocks and sands, through the persecution of my predecessor *Kienan Bassa*, and *Kifur Dramelec*, with many others in the *seraglio*: The first keeping from me the pension allowed by the Grand Seignior; the second either sending me no intelligence, or else baffling me with trifling news, nothing to the purpose; the rest aspersing me to the ministers of the *divan*.

I desire thee to send me the arrears that are behind for the space of nineteen moons, as thou wilt find in the register of the *Hafna*. Had it not been for *Eliachim*, that honest Jew, I should have been ruined in this place for want of money.

I need not say more to thee, who knowest that gold is the grand talisman which works all the miracles in the world.

Paris, 22d of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1656.



## B O O K III.

## LETTER I.—To DIGNET OGLOU.

WHO can penetrate into the mysterious conduct of destiny? whether God governs this world by the influence of the stars, or by the ministry of spirits, or by his own immediate power? or whether all things did not proceed from chance, and are still ruled by the same? Be it how it will, there remains something adorable. Even that chance itself, supposing Epicurus's opinion true, is worthy of supreme honours and sacrifices, which has, with such exquisite luck, performed all the parts of infinite wisdom and forecast, in forming and preserving the universe. Were I a disciple of that philosopher, every morning when I beheld the rising sun, and at mid-day when I saw him climb the meridian, and in the evening when he takes his conge of this upper world, to visit our Antipodes, would I, with profoundest veneration, cry out, "O eternal Chance! O omnipotent Casualty! O incomprehensible Blindness! I adore thee, I burn incense to thee, and do all things which the duller sort of mortals think are only due to an all-wise, all-good, and an all-mighty God!" Thus would I address to that infinite pell-mell of atoms, could I believe with Epicurus, that from such an inconceivable hurly-burly proceeded all this admirable beauty and order which we behold.

Thou wilt perceive by this that I am religiously disposed, and rather than not adore some supreme being, I would make a deity of that which to others is the fountain of atheism. And I think there is reason on my side; for, let this world be produced how it will, whether by the casual concurrence of atoms, or by the deli-

berate act of an eternal mind; whether it be eternally self-existent, according to the Stoics, or be the genuine result of the divine ideas, as the Platonists say; it is but just that we should pay the most devout and grateful acknowledgments to the source of so many immense prodigies and wonders.

But, then, what shall we say for all the evil that appears in the world? That there is such a thing as evil scattered up and down through all the ranks of beings, and, as it were, blended and riveted in their very essences, is manifest at first view; and every man has his share of this epidemical contagion. But whence it proceeds, who can inform me? I am not the first that have asked the question. Many ages ago the inquisitive world was busy in searching out the root of evil, and there were almost as many opinions about it as there were nations on earth.

Some asserted, that all evil came out of the north; others derive it from the south; as if the two poles were the centres and native seats of this malady of the world. But these seem to be men of short discourse and shallow reason, supinely credulous, and willing to take up with any thing rather than be at the pains of attentive contemplation.

Yet this opinion has so far prevailed in these western parts, that the Nazarene priests, when they celebrate their mass, stand on the north side of the altar at the reading of the gospel, turning their backs to that quarter of the world; and the reason they give for this ceremony is, because in the written law it is said, "Out of the north comes all evil." I have heard them seriously maintain this argument; but God knows whether there be any such place in the written law or no, or if there be, whether it must be taken in this sense. Yet I must confess the Romans have some reason to believe it, having

experimentally felt a great deal of evil from the northern Goths and Vandals, who, in former ages, rushed out of their frozen regions, and came down like a torrent upon Italy and other parts of Europe, making havoc of all things civil and sacred. And if this be the ground of their ceremony, they have greater reason now to change their station, and turn their backs to the south-east, having been much more fatally handled by the victorious Mussulmans.

The ancient Persians held, that there were two principles, or sources of all things, viz. good and evil, and that there has been an eternal quarrel between them; but in the end, they say, the good shall get the victory, and exterminate the evil. This opinion was embraced by a sect of Christians, whom they called Manichees. The founder of that sect was a Persian by birth: His name was Manes, a very learned man, as the records of the East testify; yet the Christians rank him among the most pernicious heretics. He taught that wine was the blood of devils, and therefore forbade it to his followers; he also prohibited the flesh of animals; this he learned from the priests of Egypt, where he resided a considerable time.

But to return to the sentiments of men concerning the origin of evil: There are some who affirm God is the author of it, which is not far from blasphemy; others say, that when the devils were exterminated from the earth, they, in revenge, sowed the seeds of evil in the universe: But that of the stoics seems the most plausible to me; for they asserted that nothing is evil of itself, but that the contrariety which we behold in the world is very good, and conduces to establish the order and economy of all things.

My dear Dgnet, do not esteem me an atheist because

of the liberty I take in discoursing of these mysterious things. There are a sort of people here in the West whom they call Deists, that is, men professing the belief of a God, creator of the world, but sceptics in all things else. They have no implicit faith in historical religion, but think it the part of men, as they are endowed with reason, to call in question the writings of mortals like themselves, though they had the character of the greatest prophets. Thus they think it no sin to canvass the books of Moses and the Hebrew prophets, the gospel of Jesus the Son of Mary, and the alcoran of Mahomet, our holy lawgiver; choosing what is agreeable to reason, and rejecting the rest as fabulous, inserted either by the craft of men or the interloping of the devil.

I protest there appears to me no reason to call these men atheists or infidels; they rather seem to deserve the title of philosophers, or lovers of wisdom and truth; and it is from them I have learned this unwillingness to be imposed on in matters of religion. I find them in all things men of great morality and goodness, far exceeding the zealots of the age in true virtue and pious actions; but they make no noise of what they do; and whilst only their human frailties are conspicuous to all, their perfections lie concealed under the veil of an unparalleled modesty.

Such of old were the associates of Zeid Eb'n Raphael, my countryman. This was a person of an ardent spirit and prodigious understanding, educated in the mussulman law; but when he came to those years wherein men usually examine the grounds of their religion, he sought out the most learned men, and such as were versed in all sciences. After he had conversed some time with them, and found them to be persons of integrity, as well as men of sense, he proposed to them the convenience of

frequent clubs among themselves, where they might, with an unrestrained freedom, discourse of all things, and, being united in an inviolable friendship, might improve one another in knowledge and virtue, without regarding the legends and harangues of the mollahs. This society composed fifty books of so many several kinds of science, and they called them Echwanossopha, or the Writings of the Sincere Fraternity, concealing their names. They treated of human and divine matters without reserve or caution, asserting, that the mussulman religion was corrupted and alienated from its first institution, having imbibed many errors; and that there was no way to restore it to its primitive purity, but by joining to it the philosophy of the ancients. In a word, they endeavoured to reform whatever was amiss in the doctrines and manners of the faithful, by reducing both to the standard of reason.

I know not whether thou wilt approve or dislike their enterprise; but I am sure thou art sensible, as well as I, that there are bigots among the followers of the prophet, and that those deserve correction. The devil will set his foot in the temple of God, but do not thou follow his steps; if thou do, he that made the devil fetch thee back again.

Paris, 30th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1656.

II.—*To the NAZIN ESCHREF, or Prince of the Emirs, at the Porte.*

THE Christians say, it is an argument of God's love when he chastises them; therefore they have no reason to be peevish, or call it an effect of his anger, that a dismal plague is broke out in the territories of the pope,

the kingdom of Naples, and other parts of Italy. This contagion rages so vehemently in Rome, the capital city of the western Nazarenes, that above an hundred thousand persons of several ranks have forsaken that place. The pope's palace is shut up, and no access granted to any, not even to foreign ambassadors, without great precaution, and then none of their retinue are admitted with them.

It is said seventeen hundred die daily in that city, and six thousand a-day in Naples; nay, in some places, the living are scarce sufficient to bury the dead. The Grand Duke of Tuscany, to prevent the spreading of the infection in his territories, has forbid all intercourse between his subjects and those of the pope, neither will he permit so much as a nuncio to pass through his dominions.

This mortality has frightened Queen Christina from Rome: She has sent to desire passes of the Duke of Savoy, and other princes, designing for France. She is already on her voyage, having been presented by the pope with ten thousand crowns to defray the expences of her travels. Here are great preparations making for her reception; the king having sent orders to all the governors of towns and provinces through which she must pass, to receive and entertain her with a magnificence due to her sovereign dignity, and worthy of the French grandeur and hospitality.

In the mean time, this court is in a fallen humour by reason of a late great loss they have suffered at Valenciennes in Flanders. This place was besieged by the French at the beginning of the campaign, but was relieved by the Spaniards this moon, who killed above a thousand men on the spot, took five thousand prisoners, with all their cannon and baggage. Among the captives of note is the Marechal de Ferte Sencterre, general of the French

army; the names of the others are wanting. Marechal de Turenne himself very narrowly escaped, by timely withdrawing his brigade from the fight, for which some stigmatize him with cowardice and treachery, whilst others affirm he acted the part of a prudent captain, in thus retreating, since it was impossible to restore the battle with any success.

From Sweden, we hear that the Elector of Brandenburg has entered into a league with the King of Sweden, by which both their armies are united against the King of Poland; and it is said their first design will be upon Dantzic. That country is in a horrid confusion, the nobles, gentry, and boors, being all in arms, some deserting their sovereign, others adhering to his interest. King Casimir has invested Warsaw with an army of forty thousand men. In the mean time, the Hollanders have sent a great fleet of ships of war into the Baltic sea, but to what end is not known, nor what part they will take, whether the Swedes or Poles; yet the latter hope for great assistance from them, there having been lately some misunderstanding between the Dutch and the Swedes. The Muscovites also have entered Poland with a numerous army, and the Tartars are coming with another to the aid of King Casimir.

Thus is Poland become the stage of a most terrible war; and which side soever gets the victory, that unhappy country will be near ruined.

Nathan Ben Saggi, a Jew at Vienna, and a private agent for the Grand Signior, sends me word, that the Emperor of Germany hath an army of thirty thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse in Silesia, who are to join with the Muscovites, and do some considerable action against the Swedes, whose continual victories, and growing greatness, gives jealousy to these puissant monarches.

He informs me farther, that the emperor has dispatched a courier to the Prince of Transylvania, with instructions and letters to engage him to a neutrality.

But the young Ragotski is as wild as his father, and hates to be led by the nose.

Thou mayest inform the ministers of the divan, that Adonai, the Jew, is dead of the plague in Rome, having first taken care to transmit to me all the papers which concern the mysterious Porte.

This court at present is at a place called La Fere in Picardy, a province bordering on Flanders, from whence there may be a more frequent intercourse between the king and his camp.

Prince of the holy line, I have sent thee all the news that is stirring at this juncture, saving some trivial matters, which are not worth a mussulman's knowledge, much less thine, who art distinguished from the crowd of true believers, by wearing the sacred colour of the prophet.

Paris, 30th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1656.

### III.—To MELEC AMET.

**H**ERE has been a strange accident lately, not many leagues from Paris, which has occasioned various discourses, and put the philosophers upon a new scrutiny. One morning, a certain peasant or farmer, walking over his lands, as his custom is, to number his sheep and other cattle, missed a barn, or store-house, which stood in a field at some distance from his habitation. Surprised at this, he hastened towards the place where he saw it but the night before, when, to his no small astonishment, he perceived, that not only the barn, but a great part of the field wherein it was built, was sunk into the earth.



He immediately ran and called some of his next neighbours to behold this strange spectacle, and the fame of it spread all over the country. Divers learned and ingenious persons have been there, to make observations of this accident ; but none dares venture near enough to the chasm, to look down into it, because the earth continues breaking and falling in, which makes a noise like the salvos of the janizaries, when the Grand Seignior visits the arsenal.

One would conclude by these uncommon symptoms, that the earth grows ancient and weak, that her inward strength and vigour decays, and that we are every where in danger of being swallowed up. I have not time to write more, it being midnight, and the post ready to go.

The Almighty and All-good God have thee in his holy protection.

Paris, 30th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1656.

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IV.—*To ZORNEZAN MUSTAPHA, Beglerbeg of Erz'ram.*

I WILL still congratulate thy happiness, even in this last change of thy fortune, which, though it be a kind of descent from the more lofty stations thou hast possessed in the Osman empire, yet it is attended with honourable circumstances, and an inviolable security. Thou art not out of the sultan's favour, banished to Egypt, and confined to a narrow pension during thy life, as has been the fate of several grandees ; but thou art withdrawn from the intrigues of state, the toils of war, and the plots of a courtier's life, to the sweet retirements of the country, the peaceable possession of a rich and fertile province;

where thou mayest pass thy days in uncontrollable ease and felicity.

I am not surpris'd at the fall of so many great men at the Porte, nor do I much regret the death of those who were known enemies to the government; yet it troubles me to think how the brave and the loyal had their innocent blood mingled with that of traitors and villains. But these things are unavoidable in popular insurrections, when the sovereign is compelled to sacrifice to the multitude whomsoever they require. Thus fell the illustrious Solyman, among the criminal eunuchs, though he himself was free from stain; but he was a negro, and that was his ruin; for the malcontents could not discern the fair qualities of his soul.

Curse on that fool, Chaban Kalfa, and double curses on his rampant wife, Mulkly Kadin, who gave the first occasion to all this disorder and spoil of noble blood. I remember the honest Solyman gave me once a hint of the feminine debaucheries practis'd in the queen-mother's apartments; but he spoke of it with so much modesty and reserve, that it hardly made any impression on me at that time, otherwise I should have imparted it to the Vicer Azem, or some other minister of the divan; for so am I commanded in cases that touch the honour and safety of the Grand Seignior. And I tell thee, this was none of the least importance; for, as it appears, the women were undermining the most sacred and firmly established government in the world; they were not contented to wallow in their own impious and unnatural delights, but would have set themselves as a pattern to others, and by degrees have infected the whole mussulman empire with a new species of debauchery, which, as it began, and was carried on, by embezzling the royal treasures, selling of places to men of no merit, buffoons,

pimps, and asses, so it would have ended in enervating our militia, corrupting all the faithful, and laying the empire naked to infidels.

How many visiers, kaimachams, captain bassas, and other officers, have we had killed this fatal year! Among the rest, I cannot but reflect on the poisoning of the chiaus bassa, after he was made Visier Azem, as a stroke of divine justice, for having imbrued his hands in so much noble blood, when he enjoyed that dignity once before. God pursues the cruel with invincible scourges.

But what was that Achmet bassa, who took advantage of the sultan's domestic troubles and foreign wars to disturb his government in Asia, and raise a rebellion, which threatened even the imperial city itself? By the course of his fortune, it looks as if he were not contented with his command in Asia, and therefore took this new celebrated method to obtain a higher dignity, viz. by rebelling against his master; else why was he made bassa of the sea in the room of Ourous Kienan? The bassa of Aleppo first brought into fashion this daring way of growing great; and if it be thus countenanced by the Grand Seignior, in all probability he will have reason to make peace with the Christians, that he may have respite and forces to employ against his own subjects.

Amidst all these things, nothing afflicts me so much as the horrible loss our fleet has sustained at sea. We have various reports of this combat; but in general they agree that the maffalmans have lost seventy-two ships and galleys, with an infinite number of men; that the Venetians have taken the isles of Tenedos and Lemnos, and that they are advancing to besiege Constantinople. This news is a great while coming to us; so that if it be true, and the Venetians pursued their victory, for aught I

know, by this time the imperial city, the refuge of the world, may be laid in ashes.

I have often proposed the necessity of platforms along the Hellepont, to guard that important avenue of the sacred Porte. Had they put in practice Mahmut's advice, perhaps the Nazarenes would have had no occasion for their present triumphs ; but now they banquet in the open streets ; all Christendom rings with the news of our disgrace ; the drunkards of Europe insult over the professors of sobriety ; amidst their bowls of wine they blaspheme our prophet, and sing in the praise of Bacchus their god ; they menace the conquest of Asia, and threaten to exterminate the mussulmans from the earth.

Enraged at these profane boasts, I stop my ears, and, turning round in a divine phrenzy, I pray that God would baffle the infidels.

Paris, 6th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1656.

V.—*To the Most Renowned and Most Illustrious MAHOMET, Visier Azem, at the Porte.*

**T**HAT incomprehensible Majesty, which has no resemblance, at whose pleasure all things are disposed and ordered in heaven and earth, by whose particular providence, for the good of the Osman empire, thou art exalted to this glorious trust, to be vicar of the vicar of God ; augment thy graces and virtues, and bless thee with superlative wisdom and perfect tranquillity.

I revere thy accomplished soul, consummate in all moral and political science. Thou art the most experienced man in the empire : And I cease to condole the late tumults and riots at Constantinople, though their effects were fatal to some brave men, since thou art chosen to

this dignity, from whom the whole empire may expect, not only a serener state of affairs during thy administration, but also a rooting up of the causes of these public distempers, and of all other evils which infest the monarchy designed for the conquest and reformation of the whole world.

According to the custom of the East, I approach thee not without some present: But pardon the slave Mahmut, who can send thee none worthy of thy grandeur. I have inclosed in a box the true effigies of the present King of France, with that of his uncle the Duke of Orleans, his brother the Duke of Anjou, and his cousin the Prince of Conde; as also that of Cardinal Mazarini, and Queen Christina of Sweden, who is now at the French court. Accept also from an exile, a little cabinet, containing twelve watches, of so many different contrivances, according to the circular variation of the moon in the space of thirty-four years: They are the work of my own hands, therefore I shall not commend them. Each is wrapped up in a piece of silk, wherein is wrought in Arabic letters the method of using it. Perhaps thou wilt find some diversion in trying the experiments mentioned in those tables. However, despise not this mean testimony of Mahmut's respect; but consider, that if I come short of the curious artists in Europe, yet my labour is passable enough for a muffleman, among whom there is scarce another watchmaker to be found in the world.

If thou wouldest know the occasion of Queen Christina's being at the French court, she came thither from Rome, when the last moon was in its wane. Her passage was by sea to Marseilles, having touched at Genoa, and received magnificent gifts from the republic; but they would not permit her to land, for fear of the plague,

which then raged in Rome, and was the cause of her leaving that city.

However, the French showed no such timorous squeamishness, but received her and her train with open arms. She landed at Marseilles on the 29th of the 7th moon; and when she made her public entry, the consuls of that city, with all the nobles, met her in coaches, the great guns were discharged to welcome her, and she was caressed with all the demonstrations of honour that are showed to the Queen of France herself in her progresses.

The same entertainment she received at Aix, Avignon, Lyons, and, in fine, all along the road to Paris, the keys of the towns being surrendered to her (for such was the king's pleasure), and a canopy of state borne over her head when she entered any town, and received the addresses and compliments of governors, prelates, and other great men in authority. She was likewise magnificently treated by princes and the chief dukes of the realm; and on the 8th of the last moon, made her entry into this city on horseback, apparelled like a man; where having staid some time, she departed for Compeigne to visit the court, which resides there now.

It is not supposed she will tarry long in France, but as soon as she hears the plague is abated in Rome and the adjacent parts, she will return thither to pass away the residue of her life, in that nest of princes and prelates of the Nazarene belief.

A little before she left Rome, the Spaniards there had conspired to seize on her person, as also on the pope, to have murdered the Portugal ambassador, and set the city on fire: But the plot was discovered, and conspirators put in prison; for the sentence of death is never passed in criminal cases among the Nazarenes without a formal trial.

Here is a rumour as if a great fire had some moons ago broke out in Constantinople, and consumed much of that city. I wonder none of my friends, nor any either residing there, have sent me an account of any such thing; which fills me with hopes that this report is false.

From all hands we are assured, that the Swedes and Brandenburgers have obtained a great victory over the Poles and Tartars at Warsaw; the vanquished having lost above six thousand men on the spot, with all their ammunition and baggage; and unfortunate King Casimir was forced to fly with a small retinue towards Hungary.

It was the general expectation of Europe, that the Muscovites and Germans would have done something extraordinary for the Poles, and by some surprising action put a check to the Swedish successes and triumphs; for when the Muscovite ambassador was at Königsberg, endeavouring to withdraw the Duke of Brandenburg from the Swedish interests, he vomited forth terrible menaces in case they complied not with his master's proposals; and one day, in a furious zeal, he took a large goblet of wine in the elector's presence, and having drank it off to the czar's health, the barbarian said aloud, "Thus shall the great Emperor of the Muscovites devour all that oppose him." But now it seems these were only empty bravadoes, and the Muscovites were resolved to stand by and see who got the better of it. The same may be said of the emperor and Prince of Transylvania, so of the Danes and Hollanders, who now all declare for the strongest party.

Magnanimous Visier, if the present engagements and wars in Dalmatia and Candy, besides the domestic troubles of the Ottoman empire, did not wholly employ the

arms of the mullmans, doubtless it would be an undertaking no less profitable than glorious to succour the distressed Casimir, turn the tide of the Gothic conquests, and oblige the Poles to an eternal fidelity and gratitude to the Grand Seignior.

Paris, 14th of the 10th Moon, of the Year 1656.

VI.—To ABRAHAM ELI ZEID, HOGIA, *Preacher to the Scraglio.*

I HAVE frequent access to the king's library, which favour was first granted me by Cardinal Richlieu, who often employed me in translating some curious treatises out of Arabic into French or Latin. The French seem very fond of Eastern manuscripts wherever they can meet with them; and they have no less regard for men who are skilled in those languages. That minister, especially, was very inquisitive into the wisdom and learning of Asia: He monopolized Persian, Syrian, and Arabic books, and was a professed patron of linguists; he coveted the acquaintance of strangers and travellers, that he might, by their means, inform himself of the different laws, customs, and religions of foreign countries, and of whatsoever was rare and worthy of observation in any part of the world.

Hence it was that I received evident marks of his esteem, as soon as he knew that I understood the Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, and Sclavonian languages. He often made use of me, as I have said, and gave me free access to his own and the king's library; and though his successor Cardinal Mazarini is not so much addicted to studies of this nature, as to the affairs of



state, yet he has continued to me the privilege of visiting this treasury of learned books, where I pass many hours.

One day I cast my eyes on a manuscript written in Arabic, and indorsed with this title,

*The Original Covenant of Mahomet, the Prophet of the Arabians, with the Professors of the Faith of Jesus.*

And underneath was a Latin inscription, signifying, that this manuscript was found in the convent of Christian Friars on Mount Carmel. I have transcribed the contents of this parchment, and send it inclosed to thee, that thou mayest judge whether it be real or only counterfeit; for the Nazarenes assert it to be the true agreement of the messenger of God, and therefore reproach all the mussulmans with disobedience to our lawgiver, and breaking the league signed and sealed by him whom we call the Seal of the Prophets, and witnessed by the four principal doctors, Abu Becre, Osman, Omar, and Hali.

If thou wilt peruse the inclosed paper, it will be easy to discern whether we are guilty of this violation of faith or they; for though (supposing this to be the real testament of the prophet, as is pretended) that favourite of Heaven grants many articles of peace, assistance, and friendship to the followers of Jesus, with immunity from taxes and impositions, liberty of conscience, freedom of marriages, &c.; yet it is evident, that he promised not these things but on certain conditions to be observed on the part of the Christians; as, that none of them should harbour, or hold correspondence with the enemies of the true believers, or privately accommodate them with arms, horses, money, or any other necessaries of war; but, on the contrary, should hospitably receive the mussulmans into their houses for three days, and protect them from

their enemies. If, therefore, the Christians should fail in any of these points, the prophet declares his covenant to be void, and that they shall not enjoy the indulgencies granted therein. All this, thou wilt see, is recommended solemnly to both parties, to be religiously performed till the final consummation.

Now all the dispute is, Whether we have first transgressed these articles or the Nazarenes? For if it can be proved that they are the first aggressors, then they have no reason to complain of their misfortunes, or accuse the true faithful of oppression and tyranny, as they commonly do; since it is manifest that they have drawn these evils on themselves, by their breach of faith and infidelity, annulling the covenant of God and his prophet, and forfeiting the benefits they might have claimed by virtue of it. Be it how it will, the prophet is free from blame; let the guilt rest on the persons that were criminal.

I know not how it comes to pass that the Christians of this age think and speak more reproachfully of our holy lawgiver than did their fathers, who lived in his time, or immediately after it, and who by consequence could better inform themselves of the circumstances of his birth, life, and renowned actions. Some ancient writers among the Nazarenes make honourable mention of him and his family; they conceal not the early signs of his heroic virtue, and the grandeur to which he was destined. I have read in a certain Christian author, that when the prophet was but nine years old, under the tuition of his uncle Abu Taleb, who carried his glorious charge along with him to Damascus, and that whilst they were at Boz'r, a learned monk, whose name was Bohira, came out of the convent to meet them; and taking Mahomet by the hand, in the presence of many Christians, he said aloud, "This youth is born to accomplish great things;

his fame shall be spread from east to west ; for as he drew near to this place, I saw a bright cloud descend and cover him." Sultan David also prophesied of him, in that which the Christians reckon the 50th Psalm, and the 2d versicle ; where that divine poet thus sings, " From Sion God hath proclaimed the empire of Mahomet." But the Christians have interpreted this in another sense, though the original remains a standing witness against them. So Moses, in the Pentateuch, uttered a mystery, when he said, " God came from Sinai, he rose up from Seir, and was manifested from Mount Paran ;" intimating hereby the descent of the written law to Moses, of the gospel to Jesus the Son of Mary, and of the alcoran to Mahomet. The Messias also said to his disciples, " If I go not away, the called of God will not come to you." But the Christian interpreters wilfully hide these things from the vulgar, lest their eyes should be opened. There appears an obstinate malice and ignorance in all their actions.

Who will not laugh at the foolish spite of the Spaniards, who, in a certain town, had a custom, as oft as they entered into the church, or came out, to spit on a black image of a man sitting on an ass near the gate ? But a mussulman ambassador coming thither from the Emperor of Morocco, and observing this vain ceremony of the people, asked the king, " What person that statue represented ?" He made answer, " That it was the image of Mahomet, the Arabian prophet."—" That cannot be, (replied the ambassador) since our prophet never rode but on camels : It is rather the figure of the Messias, who indeed is recorded to have rode on an ass." The king, troubled at this answer, consulted the priests and learned men, who all concluded that the ambassador had spoke the truth ; and therefore, instead of offering

any more indignities to this image, they fell into another extreme, and built a chapel for it, burning incense to the senseless stock, and paying it divine honours. Thus they prayed to that which but a little before they had cursed, and turned into a god that which they had esteemed almost as bad as the devil. God's curse be on the devil and all his adorers; but on the holy prophet and his followers, may blessings shower down, and rest till the knot of the spheres be dissolved.

Paris, 14th of the 10th Moon, of the Year 1656.

VII.—*To MURAT, Bassa.*

KNOW for certain that Don Juan de Braganza, late king of Portugal, is dead: He left this world on the 6th of the last moon, after he had been tormented ten days with the stone. His queen has the supreme power in her hands during her son's minority, whose name is Don Alphonso. This young prince was crowned within a few days after his father's decease, to prevent the plots of the Spaniards, who support a powerful faction in the kingdom of Portugal, and are not without hopes to reduce it again to the King of Spain's obedience. The world is always busy either in recovering old lost interest, or seeking of new.

The Marechal de la Ferte, who was taken prisoner by the Prince of Conde in the battle of Valenciennes, and having a price set for his ransom, had liberty to go whither he would on his parole, either to bring the said sum, or surrender his person by a certain day; finding himself slighted at the French court, is resolved to perform his promise at the prefixed time, and go over to the Prince

of Conde's interest, who will not fail to bestow a very honourable command on a general of such merits.

In the mean time, the Count of Harcourt plays tricks with his master, and holds private correspondence with the German emperor: He is a serviceable or a dangerous man, according as he is pleased or disgusted, and therefore they court him on both sides. He is now at Brisac in Alsace. I cannot admire a man that is thus industriously troublesome to his prince, without any thing of merit or bravery to boast of, save his former services in Catalonia, which have been sufficiently repaid with royal condescensions and favours. And those who make a parallel between his case and that of the Marechal de la Ferte Seneterre, consider not that the last fell into his enemies hands only by the chance of war; whereas the other is a wilful apostate, if he embraces the emperor's proposals, when no necessity constrains him, and honour flies in his face.

From the North, we are informed, that Count Coningmark, generalissimo of the Swedish forces in Prussia, as he was sailing from Wismar, was taken captive by the Poles, and imprisoned in the Castle of Weyffel-munden near Dantzic; and the inhabitants of that city missed very narrowly of taking the Queen of Sweden herself. It is certain they have got a vast booty from the Swedes, consisting of eighteen chests full of gold, with coffers of the king's jewels, and other rich things.

These King Casimir demands for himself, with a million of rixdollars, to be paid him by the Dantzigers; requiring also that they should furnish his army with all sorts of ammunition and provisions; which, though it be a heavy burden, yet those loyal citizens think nothing too much for their king.

The Muscovites, in the 9th moon, besieged Riga, a

city belonging to the crown of Sweden, but have newly raised the siege, after they had lost above ten thousand men before the place.

This is all the news I can send thee, save that the French have taken Valencia, a city in Italy.

I wish I may hear as prosperous intelligence as this last from Candia, after such immense charges and slaughter; but victory is in the disposal of the angel of time.

Paris, 2d of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1656.

VIII.—*To HEBATOLLA MIR ARGUN, Superior of the Convent of Dervises at Cogni in Natolia.*

IT is difficult to define the particular temper of my soul when I first received the news of thy predecessor's death, that renowned and venerable Bedredin, who, as thy dispatch informs me, is gone to paradise. I was neither in passion, nor yet insensible, but wholly resigned to the will of Heaven: I considered his immense virtues, and the course of nature; his wonderful age, and more admirable actions, a life equally measured by hours and prodigies of piety; for he was not in the number of those who let whole days pass away without the least good work, or without leaving any impress on the track of time. I express myself according to the vulgar saying, Time passes away; whereas in my opinion time stands still, and only we pass away, with all things subject to motion and change. It is like the mistake of those, who, sailing on the water, think the trees and mountains move, whilst only they themselves are driven before the wind; or, like the philosophy of those, who, trusting to their grosser sense, maintain the sun whirls round our world, though, according to reason and better philosophy, that globe of

light stands still, whilst ours turns round its axletree, and so deceives our eyes. Thus, whilst we mortals glide over the uncertain waves of human life, and pass by the visible and fixed land-marks of time, day and night, we imagine those land-marks move, and not we ourselves; whereas day and night remain for ever stedfast and invariable in their successive intervals, and only the elements and bodies compounded of them are subject to change.

Minutes, hours, days, and years, are not properly the measures of time, but of the motion and duration of all corruptible beings; for time is infinite, and beyond all dimensions. In a word, it is no otherwise distinguished from eternity than barely by a name.

All that I have said on this subject is comprehended in the Arabian proverb, which says, "To-morrow is never." Doubtless there is no paradox or heresy in saying, It is always to-day; or that this hour, this minute, is eternal. And from this truth sprung the contemplation of those who place eternity in a point or instant.

But to return to Bedredin; that faithful of the faithful, may his soul repose in the mercies of God, and his memory be blessed! May Gabriel, the friend of the prophet, pray for him; then Michael, Israhiel, and the messenger of death, with all the angels who made orisons for the divine favourite, after his translation from this earthly state! And when thou, and the religious fraternity under thy care, have performed the accustomed prayers and expiations for the illustrious prelate deceased, there is no question but that he shall be in a condition to intercede for you and for the whole mussulman empire; for he was a perfect saint, and the beloved of God.

O sage and reverend successor of that holy man, suffer me to tell thee, thy name Hebatolla, [the gift of God] fills me with glorious presages of thy life and administra-

tion, in that renowned college where the incomparable Bedredin shined so many years. Now he is gone to God, and to the gardens of eternal retirement, having left his seat on earth to thee, replenished with the sacred odour of virtue.

He was a religious imitator of the prophets, and of all holy men in general; a devout admirer of the Messias, and a faithful disciple of the seat of God. Now he is gone to sit down with them in the chioses of Eden, on the banks of immortal streams, and rivers of wine, milk, and honey, which glide along the alleys of paradise. This is the recompence of heroic virtue, the crown of good works, the bliss prepared for chaste and purified souls, who in their transmigration from this earth carry no stains of vice along with them; for nothing impure can find admittance into that world of glittering essence.

O Hebatolla, what is there on this obscure globe that deserves to be compared with those serener joys above, those unfulled pleasures, that untarnished bliss? And yet sometimes we taste strange felicities here on earth; but it is only when the gates and casements of paradise are open, when a celestial wind transports hither the leaves of the trees of Eden, and perfumes the air and skies with the transcendent odours of that happy region, wafting also imperfect sounds, music in soft fragments, and echos from the choirs of the blessed. Then it is the hearts of mortals feel a secret and inexpressible joy springing up from the root; this lower world (if I may so express myself) is all intrenched with pleasure; this happens not every day, but only at the seasons of divine indulgence, on the festivals of some particular saints, and in the time of the immortal jubilee, when God exhilarates the universe with uncommon favours, and an infinite largesse.



As for the rest of our enjoyments, they are mitigations indeed of the pains and inseparable miseries of this mortal life; they prevail on us to wait the appointed hour of fate, and not hurry ourselves out of the world before our time; but they deserve not to be placed in the rank of true felicities.

However, our patience under this fatigue of life, our indifference to pleasure and pain, poverty or riches, sickness or health, honour or disgrace, with all the other objects of human passion, will prove a singular argument of merit, a prevailing recommendation to the life to come, and an effectual passport to paradise: For he that is thus insensibly, yet willingly weaned from the fulsome joys of earth, by the very course of nature and decree of destiny must unavoidably ascend to a purer region, to a place capable of satisfying his aspiring soul; for nature created no appetite to baulk it.

This is the life so recommended by Jesus the Son of Mary, whose character thou hast in the library of thy convent. Here I send thee in a box that which by all the Nazarenes is esteemed his true effigies. I remember I once saw another of the same lincaments in the treasury of the Grand Seignior. These pieces are very rare, because not copied by the hands of common painters, but by the most celebrated masters in Europe. And the original draught, they say, was made by the Messias himself on a handkerchief, which he clapped to his face, and so left his lively portraiture.

I cannot ascertain the truth of this tradition; but in regard this is one of those copies which is closeted by the greatest monarchs in Christendom, I send it to thee, as a worthy ornament of thy cell, without either the peril or scandal of idolatry.

The pious Bedredin was covetous of any memoirs of

the Messias, whether written in hieroglyphics, or in the more usual characters of speech. He would have made no more exception at a picture than at a poem in praise of that holy prophet; and I question not but thou equalled him in the same indifference.

I could not so easily procure the true picture of John, furnished the Washer; but here I will give thee a short history of his life. This was a famous prophet, who lived in the days of the Messias, and was of the race of the priests: His habitation was altogether in the desert, for he was an eremite, and lived in a cave on one of the mountains of Judea: Some of the Jews took him for Elias, others for the Messias, and a third sort said he was Mahomet, whose coming was foretold in the book of their law, and in the writings of their prophets.

But John denied that he was any of these, calling himself in modesty, A Voice, or Echo. His life was very abstemious, for he fed only on the tops of plants and wild honey, drinking nothing but water of the fountain which ran by the side of his cave; and his body was only covered with a vest of camel's hair, using a leathern thong for a girdle.

To that solitary residence of his, there was great resort of people from Jerusalem and the cities round about; for the fame of his sanctity had spread through all Palestine and Syria.

He washed his disciples with his own hands in the waters of Jordan, from whence he was called the Baptist, or Washer. He daily preached repentance and good works to the incredulous Jews, and openly declared that Jesus the Son of Mary was the Messias. That holy prophet, it seems, was one of John's disciples, and had been washed by him in the river Jordan.

In fine, after many years of heroic virtue and piety,

John had his head cut off by the order of Herod the governor of Judea, because he had reprov'd the tyrant for marrying his brother's wife.

Behold these memoirs are the best presents the poor exiled Mahmut can send thee, when he congratulates thy accession to that holy chair; yet such as these were more welcome to thy predecessor than gifts of silver, gold, or precious stones; for he was a diligent collector of choice antiquities, and select fragments of history; he was also a liberal patron and encourager of philosophy and all sorts of learning. Follow thou his example, and the true faithful will be eternally oblig'd to thee. Thou hast a fair opportunity, there being, as I am inform'd, the best library in thy convent of any throughout the mussulman empire; and the dervises under thy government are men addict'd to the study of the sciences. It is pity such inclinations should want encouragement, whilst the infidels are every where busy in founding new academies and augmenting the old. There is one lately erected in the dukedom of Cleve, by the Elector of Brandenburg, where the Oriental languages and sciences are profess'd. If the Nazarenes are thus curious to pry into our learning, why should we be remiss in attaining the knowledge of their languages and histories, since thereby we shall be in a condition to know their greatest secrets?

Sage Hebatolla, let not the infidels have any longer occasion to term us barbarous and ignorant; but remember, that in promoting literature, thou wilt perform a meritorious service to the Grand Seignior.

Paris, 17th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1657.

IX.—*To SELIM AL' MOSEL, Venerable Imaum of the Mosch of Sancta Sophia.*

**P**RAISE be to God, sole lord of the zenith and the nadir, possessor of infinite regions, who hides the first meridian in the palm of his hand! The names of Peru and Mexico are not now foreign in the Ottoman empire, especially to travellers and men of science.

When our fathers first heard of America, they had no other way to express so unknown a part of the world than by calling it the Land of the Golden Mines, because of the abundance of that metal which was brought from thence by the Spaniards, since their conquests in these parts. But now we are no strangers to the geography of that remote continent: Commerce and traffic have rendered all the known nations of the earth familiar one with another; and I remember, when I was at Constantinople, the names of Peru, Mexico, Florida, &c. were as common in the Cophans, as the names of Indostan, Turquistan, Gurgistan, or any other provinces of Asia; so that a man would have been laughed at, who, in speaking of America, should have used any circumlocutions, as to call it the Empire of the Golden Mines, the world beyond the great sea, or the like.

Yet we must confess our knowledge in this kind is owing to the Franks, who sail into those far distant regions, and at their return communicate their intelligence and observations to us; for else we had been yet altogether strangers to the history of that new world.

It was first discovered by Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, in the year 1492 of the Christian hegira. This man had a happy genius in contemplating the motion of the sun, and the frame of the universe; he was no stranger to the extent of our continent, and the situation of

all its parts ; he had been often at sea, and seen divers regions ; and particularly when he was in Portugal, the most westerly part of Europe, he took great delight to walk on the shore in the evenings, and observe the setting of the sun. This custom of his produced various thoughts in his breast : But what was of most import, his reason suggested to him, that it could not consist with the order of nature, that the sun, after he left our world, served only to give light to the fishes, or gild the waves of the western ocean ; therefore, on good grounds he concluded, there must be some unknown land beyond those mighty tracks of sea, which washed the western shores of Europe and Afric.

This thought made him uneasy, and put him upon a resolution of attempting a discovery. He made proposals to the republic of Genoa, but was rejected. Then he addressed himself to Henry VII. at the English court, where, not finding encouragement, he went to the King of Spain, who approving his design, furnished him with two ships. He sailed on the ocean for the space of two moons, without seeing any land, which made his mariners mutiny, their provisions falling short ; they threatened to throw him overboard if he would not return ; but he with mild words, and strong reasons, appeased their fury, promising to sail back again if they saw not land within three days. On the third day, the boy on the main-top-mast saw a fire, and within a few hours afterwards they came within view of land.

When he had made his observations, and done what was requisite in his circumstances, he returned to give the King of Spain an account of his expedition.

After his death, Americus Vesputius was sent to conquer these unknown regions ; from whom that whole con-

continent is called America, but methinks not without some ingratitude to the first discoverer.

It would be endless to recount all the particular adventures of the Spaniards in these parts, with their cruelties and massacres: Suffice it to say, to the eternal infamy of that nation, that, according to their own writers, they butchered in cold blood above twenty millions of the natives in the space of twenty years; and all this for the lucre of their gold, though under the pretence of propagating the Christian religion.

I will not list myself in the number of those who pretend to be God's privy counsellors, neither will I presume to descant on things out of my reach; but the Spaniards have lately felt a terrible blow in Peru, which, if it be not a mark of the wrath of Heaven, is at least a sign that the earth is weary of them, especially in those parts where they have stained it with so much innocent blood.

The city Lima, not many moons ago, was all swallowed up by an earthquake; and Calao, another city not far from it, was consumed by a shower of fire out of the clouds. Eleven thousand Spaniards lost their lives in this calamity; and the earth devoured an hundred millions of refined silver, which the lucre of the Spaniards had forced out of its bowels. All the mountains of Potosi, from whence they dug their choicest metal, were levelled with the plain, and no more hopes of gold were left to their insatiable avarice.

I leave the judgment of these events to thee, who art of the holy line, full of resplendent thoughts, prophetic Ischarif, consecrated emir, glory of the house of Mahomet. Yet give me leave to tell thee, that this calamity of the Spaniards in part resembles the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the rest of the nine cities of the lake.

The infidels say there were but five; let them alone in their error; it is certain the maffulmans have the only true history of former times. Doubtlefs God is fevere in chastifements when he is incens'd againft a nation; witness the people of Aod and Themod, with the men of the Valley of Smoke, and the city whose inhabitants were in one hour all turned into ftatues of ftone, and are to be feen at this day as a ftanding monument of Heaven's difpleafure. Yet no nation is ruined till it ruin itfelf, as God fpeaks in the Alcoran.

O emir, in whole veins runs the moft purified blood in the world, pray for Mahmut, that he may never turn apoftate from God and his prophet, nor do any thing which may hurry him to an untimely fate.

Paris, 17th of the 1ft Moon, of the Year 1657.

X.—*To MUSTAPHA, Baffa.*

THIS following fummer, if all reports be true, is like to afford fome campaigns of blood. The general difcourfe here is, that the Grand Seignior will fpeedily have an army of three hundred thoufand men in the field, part to act in Dalmatia and Candy againft the Venetians, the reft to be employed againft the Perfians, the more inveterate enemies of the Ottoman empire.

That faucy ambaffador Iſhmael Bir Couli Chan deferved the punifhment was inflicted on him for his impertinent huff, and drawing his fabre in the prefence of the greateft monarch of the world: And let it be an eternal precedent to the envoys of foreign princes, that they may learn a leſſon of moderty when they addrefs to the lord of their lords, and not by prefumption inconfult the king of the earth.

But it is apparent this ambassador took advantage of our troubles: He swelled with a vain and false idea of the Persian puissance; besides, they say, his master has entered into a solemn league with the Czar of Muscovy against the shining empire. And it is certainly known here, that two ambassadors are arrived at Venice from that potent emperor of the north; and others are expected from Persia to negotiate a tripartite league between those crowns and that republic against the victorious Osmans. Hence I suppose it was that the rude heretic took the boldness to commit an action which all the East punishes with death. Neither is it any thing to the purpose what the Christians of these parts say, that the persons of ambassadors are sacred; for much more so are the persons of sovereigns. And so long as an envoy obeys the law of nations, in only delivering his message with respect and civility, that law will protect him from all injuries; but if he must needs leap over his own fence, and, instead of appearing like an ambassador, he will act the part of an assassin, a furious, a contemner of majesty, he can expect no better treatment than what is due to his audacious insolence; he throws off with scorn the protection that his character claims, and in a mad bravado courts the revenge of the state.

This Ishmael has all along been counted a bold fool in the court of Persia: He has committed a thousand wild pranks at Ispahan, more becoming a jester than a wise minister of state. Yet his master still winked at his extravagancies for his father's sake, who did many notable services to that crown; among which, his recovering Candahar from the Mogul was none of the least, it being the only town which commands the frontiers of Persia and the Indies.

For this and other merits, Sha Sophi preferred both



him and his son to the most considerable governments and offices in the empire, wherein the old man acquitted himself fairly to the last; but this young buffoon grew unwisely with too much honour, affronted the grandees, and played upon the king himself, for which he had once like to have been cast to the dogs; but, at the intercession of some of his few friends, that punishment was remitted, and changed into exile, whilst his enemies made use of his absence to ruin him.

They were some of the greatest lords of the court who bore him a grudge, and they had hourly the king's ear, which advantage they made use of to insinuate such an ill character of Ishmael, that he knew no better way to be handsomely rid of him than by sending him on this desperate embassy to the mysterious Porte; choosing rather that he should fall by the Grand Seignior's command than by his own, who had reaped so much benefit from the services of his father.

By this thou mayest discern that the King of Persia is earnestly resolved upon war, without regarding how his herald that proclaimed it is received; for that ambassador deserves no other title, who comes not with the accustomed presents and supplications, but with an address of a harsher style, denouncing enmity at his very first approach to the feet of the invincible Sultan Mahomet.

After all, it rejoices me to hear that thou and the other bassas of the empire are so ready to assist our great master; for I am assured, that from your personal and voluntary contributions, he has received a supply of thirty millions of aspers, besides the constant revenues, customs, tributes, and subsidia of the empire. This is aced all over Christendom; yet the Venetians seem not much to dread the consequences of these vast preparations, judging that they will be employed elsewhere, than

against any province of their dominions, except in Dalmatia, where these infidels trust to the strength of their forts, and the inaccessible height of rocks.

But he that laid the foundations of the earth, and causes it to tremble when he pleases, the same God formed the lofty mountains, and can level them with plains, to serve the followers of his prophet; even as the stones came voluntarily to salute the divine messenger himself, the trees roused themselves as out of a deep sleep, and the earth yielding on all sides to the forcible motion of the inspired roots, they walked out of their places, and composed an umbrella over the head of Mahomet, when he was ready to faint with the violent heat of the sun.

Thus shall the elements conspire to aid the true believers; and when they fight for the Alcoran against infidels, God shall endow the inanimate beings with faith and devotion.

Paris, 7th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1657.

XI.—*To MEHEMET, an exiled Eunuch, in Egypt.*

**P**REPARE thyself with a constancy of spirit becoming a mussulman, when thou shalt understand that the best friend thou hadst in the world is gone to paradise. May God grant him the repose of a true believer, an apartment of singular delight; for it is the brave Solyman I speak of, who not only deserves thy most grateful vows for saving thy life, but has done a thousand meritorious actions besides, which now crown him with chaplets of immortality.

I wish I could have been the relater of better news to my banished friend; but perhaps thou hast heard of his death already by some vessels from Constantinople, and so

it will be needless to say any thing as to his untimely fate, or the tragedies of the seraglio and imperial city.

It seems very strange to me, and a thing unaccountable, that there can be no means found out to prevent these dangerous insurrections of the soldiers, and that the most formidable empire on earth should be thus frequently shocked by her own subjects. Mehemet, the things of this present world are a perfect riddle, and our life itself is but the shadow of a dream. Thou hast experienced the inconstancy of fortune, and that there is nothing on earth deserves a wise man's confidence; therefore, if I may advise thee, it shall be to wean thyself from the trivial affairs of mortals. Let not the natural fondness which thou mayest possibly have for thy former courtly life in the seraglio, return to disquiet thy soul; a man may be happy any where that knows how to be contented. Nature is served with a little, and we ought to esteem our irregular appetites as foreigners. If our fortune be not extended to the larger measure of our wishes, it is easy to contract and adequate our minds to our fortune.

Thou mayest care to thyself various sorts of felicities in Egypt, and render Cairo as pleasant to thee now as Constantinople was formerly. Virtue makes all places delightful. If thou art for an active life, there is business enough in that populous city; and opportunities are never wanting to a man that is ready to lay hold of them. Besides, it is the popular character of Egypt, that whosoever dwells in it, finds an employment suitable to his inclination. But if thou art melancholy and contemplative, in my opinion thou couldst not have chosen a country more agreeable to such a temper.

Were I in thy station, I should make frequent visits to the pyramids, and never be weary of searching out the antiquity of these admirable structures. There is hardly

any thing made by human art which has put me upon more important studies and disquisitions than the original of these stupendous fabrics: They far surpass in grandeur and magnificence the most renowned buildings of the Greek and Roman empires, even in the zenith of their most flourishing state; and I would fain learn when they were first erected, by whom, and for what ends: For I cannot believe what Josephus the Jewish historian reports of them, that they were built in the time of Moses their lawgiver, and that all those of the Hebrew nation, amounting to some hundreds of thousands, were employed as slaves in the work by the king then reigning in Egypt.

I have perused Herodotus the Grecian, Diodorus the Sicilian, with Strabo, Pliny, and other writers, who have all taken great pains to search into the antiquity of the pyramids; yet after all their travel in Egypt, and their converse with the priests of that country, they seem to have received but small light in this affair, leaving things in uncertainty, and not agreeing in their accounts. One will have them to be only designed for sepulchres of the kings; another says they were built by Joseph the Hebrew, the visier of Egypt, and that they were the granaries where he laid up seven years provision of corn, against the famine which in his days afflicted the earth. Thus they differ in their sentiments. And our countryman, Ibn Abd' Adholm, declares, that when he was in Egypt, he could not draw from any of the priests the least certainty as to the age of these pyramids, or their founders; which makes him conclude, that since there was no memory or footsteps of their original left among men, it is probable they were built before the flood.

This agrees exactly with what others of our Arabian writers have delivered concerning King Saudrid, who

reigned in Egypt three hundred years before the deluge: They relate strange things of this prince, and among the rest, that he dreamed, "The fixed stars came down from heaven to the earth, overturning all things with the violence of their precipitate fall." Being much troubled at this vision, he sent for the priests and sages, who, when they were assembled together in the king's palace, Aelimon their cater, or prince of the astrologers, told the king, "That a year before, he had seen a vision, which made a deep impression on his mind; for the celestial orbs appeared to descend so low as to touch the earth, so that the stars were mingled among men. Then he lift up his hands above his head in his dream, to keep the heaven from quite oppressing mortals with its weight. Whilst I was in this posture, (said he) methought I addressed myself to the sun, beseeching the resplendent god to retire with all his glittering train of lights to their ancient station on high; whereupon the sun made answer, When I shall have accomplished three hundred circuits, the heavens will return to their proper places."

When Aelimon had related this vision, the king commanded the astrologers to erect a scheme of the present configurations above, and to tell him what they presaged. They did so, and all agreed, that a deluge should first overflow the whole earth, and that afterwards it should be totally destroyed by fire.

Upon the hearing of this, they say, King Saurid commanded the pyramids to be built, carrying all his riches into them, with the tables of the mysterious sciences and laws, and whatsoever was esteemed precious and worthy to be preserved from the general destruction. And the annals of Egypt say that he commanded these words to be engraved on them:

1 SAUDRID laid the foundation of the Pyramids, and finished them in six years; yet I challenge any future king to demolish them in six hundred years, though it be much easier to ruin than to build. I covered them with silks; let any man after me cover them with mats, if he can.

In thus asserting Saudrid to be the founder of the pyramids, it ought to be understood only of some of the greatest; and that other succeeding princes, (perhaps after the flood) spurred on with emulation and desire of glory, built the rest; which is the only way to reconcile our Arabian writers to Herodotus, Diodorus, and other historians of the West, who assign Cheops or Chemnis, with Chephrem, Chabryis, and Mycerinus the son of Chemnis, as founders of some particular pyramids; whilst Strabo and Pliny ascribe the building of one to Rhodope, a famous strumpet, or at least to some of her paramours.

Doubtless there is great obscurity and confusion in the records of the ancients about the exact time when these illustrious monuments were built, which yet is an impregnable argument of their antiquity; since, when one author asserts this or that king to have built a pyramid, another demonstrates the contrary, by proving, that that pyramid was in being long before the days of the supposed founder. Neither can I find any concurrence of authorities so rational and exactly agreeing as that of the Arabians, who all unanimously deliver, as a certain truth, that these unparalleled structures were built long before the flood; all which is confirmed by the Egyptian annals themselves, penned by those of the Coptite race, who descended from Coptim, son of Masar, the son of Bauser, the son of Cham, the son of Noah; with whom and his family, Philemon the good priest made an alliance.

by marriage, and in their custody were the records and traditions of the old world.

But if it be granted, dear eunuch, that those histories are true which relate the transactions of the kings of Egypt before the flood, what reason have we to call in question the fragments of Manethos, a priest of Egypt, or the genealogy and succession of Egyptian monarchs delivered by Herodotus, or the chronological registers of Egypt unfolded by Diodorus, which carry up the reign of their kings to above a thousand years beyond any other the most early epocha of the creation, except that of the Assyrians, or the interminable ascent of past ages in the records of the Chinese and Indians?

I know not what to call it, whether the cowardice of the intellect which dare not venture to launch into so vast a speculation, or its sloth, which will not take the pains to unfold and stretch its drowsy faculties on the most natural idea in the world. It is true, indeed, we cannot without some fatigue contemplate steadfastly the eternal existence and duration of things; it is an immortal thought that can transport the soul back through such an infinity of ages. Yet the pleasure is agreeable to the undertaking; because truth, serene as the mornings in Egypt, enlightens the prospect, and tempts the mind, if it were possible, to look even beyond eternity itself; whereas, he that only confines his view to the narrow horizon of particular histories, is like a man in a wilderness, or a low and shady vale, where his eye is curbed with the interposition of thickets, uneven ground, and envious inclosures; for such are the dark controversies, inextricable difficulties, and affected umbrages of most writers, who never durst peep over the mountains of received opinion, or if they did, they fearfully or maliciously hid their discoveries from the rest of mortals. I

tell thee, as God is eternal, there cannot be assigned an instant of time wherein the world did not exist ; for the first matter flows as naturally from his essence as light from the sun.

If thou adorest any other God but this, thou wilt be found in the number of idolators and infidels, who pay divine honours to certain mighty angels, architects, as they believe, of the universe.

They behold houses, castles, and great cities built by mortals, and at a certain period ruined by fire, water, earthquakes, or other accidents, or destroyed by the effects of war ; from hence they form a notion of the world's original and catastrophe. They consider the animals, plants, and minerals ; that every individual perishes in time ; and that even in the heavens there are strong symptoms of corruption and alteration ; hence they collect arguments to prove the weakness and decay of universal nature, which they vainly compare to the life of a man, a beast, or a tree ; and as these have their appointed seasons of birth, growth, maturity, decay, and death, so it is with the universe.

But all this is sophistry ; or, to speak more favourably, we ought to charge it to the account of short meditation ; for though the individuals of all kinds are changed, cease, and disappear at their appointed periods, yet the species or kinds themselves remain for ever before our eyes. As fast as one man dies, another is born ; and so it is with the brutes ; and the seasons of the year in their proper course renew all the vegetables : We find the elements, the sun, moon, stars, and earth remain unchangeable ; and why then should we think they were not always so, and will not continue so for ever ? Or if this be too bold a stretch, let us conceive them at least much more ancient and durable than they are generally thought



to be ; and if these greater beings shall undergo a change in their outward forms, we may yet believe their substances will remain for ever.

But whether corporeal beings are thus lasting or no, we have something in us that can never perish : Our souls are immortal, and need not the embalming of Egypt to preserve them from corruption.

Therefore, dear Mehemet, since we are destined to live for ever in one state or other, let us not fear death, which is but a minute's slumber, a short trance, out of which we shall immediately awake, to increase our knowledge and experience of those mysteries and secrets in nature, which at present are hid from us. In a word, let us live like philosophers, and then we may hope to die with the same equanimity of spirit as he did, who in his last agonies, being asked by his friend, " Where was all his philosophy now ?" Answered, " I am just entering on a new discovery concerning the nature of salt." And with that word he expired.

Paris, 7th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1657.

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## XII.—*To the Most Venerable MUFTI.*

If the public seditions should always continue, or be as frequently renewed as they have lately been at Constantinople, and if their effects shall be equally fatal to the grandees as has been this last horrid mutiny of the soldiers, to congratulate any man's rise to an eminent dignity, will be but to flatter him, and addresses of this nature must be esteemed no better than mock compliments, civil insults, and fashionable sarcasms ; since, at this rate, great honours ought to be looked on no otherwise but as direct advances and nearer approaches to infamy and

death, when a man is exalted from an obscure fastness and humble security to the glorious hazard of a precipitate fall.

It is therefore when I come to kiss the dust of thy feet among the crowd of true believers, and to welcome thee to the most sacred and sublime vicarship on earth, I draw near with an indifference suitable to a Mussulman, wishing thee not more joy than safety in that mysterious station, but such a temperament of both as is due to thy sanctity and incorrupt actions. In a word, I wish thee a perpetual immunity from thy predecessor's temptations, and from his crimes, and then thou needest not fear his misfortune and disgrace.

Let not what I have said pass for an argument of disrespect and undutifulness to the heir of prophetic and apostolic revelation, the great patriarch of the faithful. I reverence both thy office and person, yet am commanded to avoid flattery and partial addresses when I write to the greatest sages in the empire; and had not this injunction been laid on me, my own natural temper would prompt me to shun that vice which renders a man so much less than himself, by how much he exalts another above his due.

I have often proposed to thy predecessor the mighty benefit that would redound to the whole Ottoman empire, if learning were more encouraged, and the histories of foreign nations were translated into the familiar language of the Mussulmans.

It is, that those who are destined to subdue all things, and have already spread their glorious conquests through the greatest part of the earth, should be acquainted with the transactions of former times, the wars of illustrious and brave heroes, the rise and fall of ancient kingdoms, and, in general, the most noted revolutions in the world.

From such records our generals and military men may draw examples of fortitude and patience, conduct and prudence, in all the fatigues and difficulties of war ; our statesmen may improve their knowledge in all the maxims of policy and wisdom requisite in time of peace ; in fine, men of all conditions may learn the precepts of morality and virtue.

Methinks it is pity, that we who possess the territories of the ancient Grecians, the kingdoms of Corinth, and the Argives, the commonwealth of Athens and Lacedemon, the empire of Macedon and the state of the Jews, should be ignorant of the laws by which these divers countries were of old governed, and the characters, lives, and actions of their first lawgivers, and succeeding governors.

But if thou shalt determine, that the knowledge of these remote affairs is superfluous and unnecessary for true believers, let them at least not be ignorant in their own history, and the original of their progenitors.

It is true we Arabians have all along taken care of our genealogies, every family and tribe being diligent to preserve the memory of their ancestors ; and all concur with an unanimous zeal to register the holy lineage of Mahomet, the messenger of God ; so that we can from his father Abdalla run up in a direct paternal line to Caydar, the second son of Ismael, on whom be the benedictions of God. We are not ignorant how this Caydar (from whom the noble Coreis derive their pedigree) first settled at Mecca, in pure devotion to the square temple, which was built by angels, when he might as well have chosen the more fertile plains of Medea, Persia, and Assyria, as did his brethren Doama, Naphis, and Redma. But he foresaw, by his skill in astrology, that the inhabitants of those regions would be idolaters ; and so it came to pass,

for they were in the number of those who adored the fire. For the same reason, he chose not for his seat Armenia, though that country be renowned for the resting of Noah's ark on Mount Geudis, and the famous city Themanine, being the first city built after the deluge by the eighty who escaped in the ark; but Caydar knew that the people of that province should worship the sun, and it was verified in the posterity of his brethren Nab-fam and Masna. Therefore he chose Mecca, though a barren country, because he knew it was the seat predestined to the elect lineage, the generation of just men and prophets, from whom was to spring the light of the world, Mahomet, who in paradise is called Al Batrafim, and in heaven Achmet.

Caydar was the only son of Ismael who took part with his father, and followed his example, worshipping one God, creator of the worlds, as he had learned by tradition from Abraham the beloved of the Eternal; whereas Nabayeth, Abdael, Thema, and the rest of the twelve, either adored the sun, moon, and stars, or the elements, except Jackour, who paid divine honours to the true Bet-lemer, and Hadal and Massa, who sacrificed beasts to the idols Bohinun and Alleze.

And as our historians have been thus particularly exact in recording the affairs of the twelve sons of Ismael, so have they showed themselves no less precise in relating the transactions of the twelve tribes which descended from them, even down to the present age.

I do not insist on this, to teach thee something whereof thou art ignorant, but to put thee in mind of the benefit and advantage, besides the vast delight which accrues to a nation, by thus preserving the memoirs of their ancestors, in which my countrymen have exceeded the fidelity and care of all other people.

Had it not been for the industry of Arabian writers, the history of the whole Saracen empire, the succession of the caliphs, with their wars and conquests, would have been either quite lost to this age, or at least much depraved and falsified by the malice of Christian and Persian authors, both equally enemies to the truth; by which it is evident, that every nation ought to register their own transactions.

What, therefore, I chiefly aim at is, that the glorious Osmans, who have by their valour entered into the possessions and territories of many ancient nations, might also be acquainted with the histories of those people whose lands they enjoy; but above all, I wish, that after they have found a way to so much wealth and honour, they would not lose themselves, and their own original.

I speak of the Turks, properly so called, the descendants of the Scythians, who by some were esteemed the most ancient nation on earth; a people formed by nature for the empire of the world; were never conquered themselves, yet spread their victories over all Asia. They routed Zopyrio, a general of Alexander the Great; and drove back a huffing King of Egypt, with shame and loss, to his own country; in fine, they were a people naturally just, temperate, hardy, and endowed with all the excellent qualities which the philosophy of the Greeks and Romans could never inspire into their subjects, though they aimed at it.

These were the people, O oracle of believers, from whom the present Turks descend; and is it not a shame that they can give no other account of their ancestors, but what they borrow from the Christians, who in the mean time reproach the mussulmans with ignorance and barbarism?

It is for this reason I renew the same request to thee, which I often made to thy predecessor, that learning may be encouraged: Let all the ancient records, and histories of the Greeks and Romans be sought out and translated, by men skilful in languages, into the familiar speech of the Ottomans: Some, I know, are already common among the grandees, as Herodotus, Plutarch, and others; but let not any credible writer be wanting.

In doing this, thou wilt put a check to the scoffs of infidels, augment the honour and interest of the muslimans, and leave an immortal name behind thee on earth; which will make thy joys in paradise more sweet to an infinity of ages.

Paris, 19th of the 3d Moon, of the Year 1657.

### XIII.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

ALL Europe, except the French and Swedes, hangs down the head for the death of the German emperor: He went to the immortals on the 2d day of this moon, after a long fit of sickness, and forty-nine years life on earth.

Nathan Ben Saddi, the agent of the Porte at Vienna, informs me, that on the same day whereon the emperor died, the imperial palace took fire on a sudden, and with such impetuosity, that a great part of it was presently consumed, and the King of Hungary and Bohemia, the emperor's son, narrowly escaped with his life. This is esteemed a bad omen to the empire; and, without being superstitious, I can assure thee, that Germany is in a very bad condition at this juncture: The electors are so divided on the score of religion, and their secular in-

terests and alliances, that in all probability they will not with ease decide the succession.

The Duke of Brandenburg having united himself to the Swedes, will not consent to the installing Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, the emperor's son, because that prince supports the cause of the Poles and Danes: The Palatine of Heydelberg and Duke of Bavaria are at odds about their private pretensions: The Duke of Saxony would fain be emperor himself, or have one at least of the Lutheran religion: And the rest are so incensed against the House of Austria, that it is thought none but the ecclesiastic princes will vote for the King of Hungary and Bohemia: So that there being no king of the Romans to claim the succession by the laws of the empire, the throne is like to be vacant yet a while.

Cardinal Mazarini, who watches all opportunities to aggrandise his master, has dispatched away several couriers into Germany, to negotiate privately with the electors, and concert those measures which will be most for the interest of France; and I tell thee this minister has no small influence on the Elector of Colen, and Prince Palatine of the Rhine; besides, thou wilt say, he goes the right way to work, when thou shalt know that he makes use of the French gold to compass his designs.

No sooner did the news of the emperor's death arrive at this court, but it was observed the cardinal took up a hundred thousand pistoles of the public bankers in this city; and every body guessed how it would be disposed.

The Portuguese ambassador at this court has caused extraordinary fire-works to be played on the river Seine, before the palace of the king, in honour of his master's coronation, the young King of Portugal. But the Spaniards are preparing more destructive fire-works on the

frontiers of that kingdom, being ready to enter it with an army of sixteen thousand men, to recover the Portuguese crown.

In sending thee these intelligences, sage minister, I am not concerned for the infidels. Who dies or who lives, who rises or who falls, is all one to Mahmut, provided the Grand Seignior's health, life, and happiness be augmented: And this I speak as an Arabian and true believer.

Paris, 30th of the 4th Moon, of the Year 1657.

XIV.—*To RABA MAHOMET, General of the Ottoman Forces, at his Camp near Adrianople.*

THE sacred empire of true believers is beset at this time with infidels, rebels, and heretics. Here are many rumours spread abroad, concerning the Persians, and the interest they have in the bassa and citizens of Babylon. They talk also that some malcontents design things which ought not to be named.

God has given me two ears, and I hear these discourses with both, but I entertain them with one unchangeable judgment, that they are only the whispers of fame, which has a thousand double tongues. If it be true, that the four chiauses, who were dispatched to Babylon from the Grand Seignior, to confirm the inhabitants of that city in their allegiance, and assure them of speedy succours, were murdered by the disloyal citizens, I doubt not but it is as true, that the plague has consumed the greatest part of the Red-heads, in their camp at Aransacat. What though these Babylonian mongrels cry, "Long live the King of Persia!" the rest of the empire, with true zeal and devotion, pray for the health and prosperity of the



Grand Seignior. What though the sultan has sworn by God and his throne, by the heavens and earth, that he will go against the Venetians in person! the musti can easily absolve him in case of supreme necessity, when his presence is requisite against the more accursed Kylibaschi.

It is probable the Osman monarchy may be much embarrassed by domestic troubles and foreign wars; yet he that founded it, and is the conservator of ages, will out of these very distempers and evils produce a good constitution of health in the state, and a firmer establishment against all enemies.

In the mean while, the Venetians are very busy in their levies at home, and in making interests abroad. Couriers are perpetually posting up and down Christendom to and from that city. They would willingly have all the business of Europe superseded for their sakes. Every where it is whispered there is some grand design on foot against the Turks, but nobody knows what. And I tell thee, France, Spain, Germany, Poland, Sweden, and the rest of the Nazarene kingdoms, are too much entangled among themselves to have any thoughts of meddling with remote affairs.

The Poles would have had the German emperor take that crown in vassalage, on condition of protecting it from the Swedes; but whilst the emperor was alive, he weighed the difficulties, and refused so chargeable an offer. Now he is lately dead, and the empire is hardly capable to defend itself.

Differences are newly risen between the Duke of Bavaria, and the Elector Palatine of Hydelberg, each claiming the right to be vicar of the empire during the vacancy, and they are preparing on both sides to dispute the matter with the sword; whilst the King of Sweden

smiles secretly at their intestine quarrels; resolving to be revenged on Germany for the assistance they have given to Casimir King of Poland.

At the same time, the Danes are arming and equipping by sea and land, to demand justice of the Swedes: Whilst the cunning Muscovite stands aloft, amusing all parties with specious pretexs, but designing only to play his own game, and espouse that quarrel which will bring him most booty. Prince Ragotski promises fair to the Swedes, but it is thought will prove false in the end. The councils of these uncircumcised are full of treachery; they are infatuated, blinded, and know not what they do.

The case is as bad in Spain, where the king is making vast preparations to enter Portugal, and claim that crown, hoping to make advantage of their domestic factions since the death of Don Juan de Braganza, the late Portuguese King; not considering that the French are like to find him work enough in Italy, Flanders, and Catalonia, besides the continual damages he receives by sea from the English, and the losses he sustains in America. I tell thee, in a word, all Europe is at this time in such a hurly-burly, that they have no leisure to attend our motions in the East, every kingdom and state being wholly busied in their own affairs, and Venice can rely on nothing but her own strength. Go on then, brave general of the army, destined to chastise these infidels; and let nothing discourage thee from pursuing the aims of honour and religion: Let the proud Franks know that there is a sword drawn in the East, which will never be put up, till it has not only cut off the exterior members, but even ripped up the bowels of the western empire.

The inhabitants of Sicily are in great consternation, by reason of a fresh eruption of fire from Mount Etna,

or Mount Gibel, whereby the city Catania, and adjacent parts, are much in danger, and the ashes are scattered all over the island. This mountain has at times flamed forth in an extraordinary manner from immemorable ages, and in all probability will continue to do so till the day of judgment.

There is like to be a new quarrel between France and Holland, the latter complaining, that they have had above three hundred merchant ships taken from them by the French within these seven years; upon which they have stopped two vessels belonging to this kingdom, and misunderstandings increase apace between them.

In the mean time, the German court is preparing to choose a new emperor: His son is the person designed for this dignity, if the electors do not oppose it. His name is Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, King of Hungary and Bohemia: He lies sick of a dangerous disease, not less loathsome than the plague.

And now I have mentioned this scourge of God, it will not be amiss to inform thee, that in Rome and Naples, where it has raged these eleven moons, and has destroyed an hundred and eighty thousand people, it is not now to be heard of; commerce is restored; public courts sit; ambassadors have audience; and all things run in their wonted channel: Yet in Genoa they feel it still.

The souls of these infidels are infected with an infernal pestilence, and therefore God rains curses on them, whilst the elect in all nations are preserved from all evil, being marked in the forehead by the angel of health.

Paris, 15th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1657.

XV.—*To CARA HALI, Physician to the Grand Seignor.*

I HAVE encountered a passage in the history of the first caliphs, which a little entangles me. My faith is disjointed. Thou knowest we mussulmans believe, that Abu Becre was the true successor of the prophet; yet when I consider that he attained the sovereignty by surprise, without the consent of the mussulmans, I know not what to think of it.

After the death of the messenger of God, the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina raised a sedition, and took up arms, each challenging the right of election to themselves; when to prevent the ill consequences of this tumult, Abu Becre and Omar immediately came to them, and, to end the controversy, Omar stretching forth his hand to Abu Becre, saluted him caliph, and lifting up his hand to Heaven, swore allegiance to him; which example suddenly prevailed on others, and so the tumult was appeased. Yet Omar himself seemed to repent of what he had done; for a while after he was heard to say, “Assuredly the inauguration of Abu Becre was a rash unadvised thing; God avert the evil which may result from it. But let it be a law, that if any one hereafter shall presume to do as I have done, and swear fealty to another, without the assent of the mussulmans, he shall be put to death.”

But that which is of greatest moment with me, is, that Ali Eben Abi Taleb, the son-in-law of the prophet, was not present at this election, who had as much right to the caliphate as any of them, if not more; at least he had a right to vote: And when he first heard the news, he protested against what they had done as null and invalid, in regard they had not consulted him. Certainly Ali Eben Abi Taleb was a matchless hero, per-

forming miracles of valour in defence of the prophet. When he besieged Chaibar, a city of the Jews, he took the gates of the city from off their hinges, and used them as his shield; when he brandished his glittering sword, he made his enemies tremble. I will say no more in his praise, lest thou shouldst conclude, I have lifted myself in the number of the Kyfilbaschi. What I write is only by way of scrutiny, being dissatisfied about these things.

So when Abu Becre lay on his deathbed, he called for Othman Eben Aphan, the scribe, and bid him write as follows: "In the name of God, gracious and merciful, this is the testament of Abdollah Eben Abu Kohapha, when he was arrived to the last hour of this world, and the first of the world to come." Then he fell into a trance, while Othman proceeded, and wrote the name of Omar Eb'no'l Chattab. Then Abu Becre awaked, and asking Othman "Whom he had named for his successor?" he replied, "Omar." "Thou hast done well (said he), and according to my mind; yet if thou hadst named thyself, assuredly thou art worthy of the honour." Thus Omar succeeded in the caliphate, by the private order of Abu Becre, without asking the consent of the mussulmans. It looks like a contrivance or bargain between those two at first; when Omar swore fealty to Abu Becre, one would suspect he made him promise to bequeath the caliphate to him. Be it how it will, thou seest Omar accepted the government, on conditions which he himself had made unlawful, when he prohibited any succession that should be made without the consent of the mussulmans. He was the first that was called Amiro'l-mumenin, or commander of the faithful.

It is reported, that when Omar was near his death, those that stood about him desired him to name his suc-

cessor ; they themselves recommended Ali Eben Abi Taleb, because of his relation to the prophet ; but he rejected him, and committed the election of his successor to Othman, Ali, Telha, Azobair, Abu Obeid, and Saad Eben Abi Wakka. Abu Obeid therefore coming to Ali Eben Abi Taleb, said thus to him, " Art thou he to whom I may swear fidelity, that thou wilt act according to the book of God, and the laws of his prophet, and the constitutions of the two seniors ?" Ali answered, " I will ever act according to the book of God, and the law of his prophet ; but as to the constitutions of the two seniors, I will follow my own counsel." Then Abu Obeid going to Othman, said the same words ; and Othman promised to perform all that they required. So they chose Othman to succeed Omar in the caliphate. He was accused of too great partiality to those of his blood ; for he recalled Hacem Ebno'l-As Eb'n Omais, whom the prophet had banished. He gave him also an hundred thousand aspers, and to Abdella Eb'n Chaled he gave forty thousand. They taxed him also with pride, in that he sat in the highest seat of the prophetic throne, where none but the holy prophet himself had ever sat ; for Abu Becre, in reverence to the messenger of God, sat one step below it, and Omar two. So that the Arabians being incensed at Othman's arrogance, and other vices, took up arms, and killed him. Then succeeded Ali.

I rehearse this history to thee, that thou mayest know the particular grounds of my dissatisfaction, and give me thy opinion in this matter. For, if Abu Becre, Omar ; and Othman, were unlawfully lifted to the caliphate, it follows that they were usurpers, and Hali the only true successor of the prophet. And, if this be granted ; then we have no reason to curse the Persians, who are the fol-

lowers of Hali. God knows which is in the right, we or they. We all are disciples of the prophet, and believe in the unity of the divine essence. God bless Mahomet our lawgiver, with all those of his house. God bless Mahomet our glorious sultan: In fine, God bless thee and me.

Paris, 15th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1657.

XVI.—*To CACA MUSTAPHA, Bassa.*

By the notices which I receive from Constantinople, it appears that the ground of all the public discontents in that city is the Venetians conquest and possession of Tenedos; as if the people thought that island would prove as fatal now to the mussulmans as it was formerly to old Troy, when the Grecians, under the conduct of Agamemnon, pitched their first camp there, to recover Helena, the fairest woman of Greece, whom Paris the Prince of Troy had ravished from her husband's embraces.

That rape was fatal to the Trojans; for, after a ten years war, their city was taken by stratagem, and burnt to ashes; their princes and nobles either all slain, or carried away captives by the victorious Greeks; only Æneas saved his father alive, carrying him on his back out of the flames, and with some other commanders escaped to sea, in such vessels as they found ready. The history of all his adventures is too tedious for a letter; suffice it to say, that after many voyages from one region to another, at last he landed in Italy, where he and his company settled; and from them the Venetians, with other people of Europe, derive their original.

It is this makes their present possession of Tenedos appear as an ill omen in the eyes of the superstitious; as if

those relics of ancient Troy were now come to recover the habitations of their fathers, and drive both Greeks and musfulmans out of the empire.

But these are only chimeras and dreams; for when a nation is once displanted from their native seat, they seldom or never take root there again: Besides, who knows whether the Venetians descend from Troy or no? It is true, indeed, if historians speak truth, that Æneas failed into Italy two years after the burning of Troy; it is probable also, that he built Lavinium, as Padua is ascribed to Antenor, one of his captains. But where is the consequence, that the Venetians should therefore be the offspring of these heroic fugitives? They may as well say the French are the posterity of the Moors, because these Africans once seated themselves in Spain; for just so independent are the states of Italy one of another, and their inhabitants of as different genealogies, as are these two potent kingdoms, with the people that dwell in them.

And now the Trojan war is in my mind, I cannot but smile at the egregious folly of Ajax, the son of Telamon. This was a great commander in the Grecian army, a huge, brawny, giant-like fellow, that had performed prodigies of strength and valour in combating the Trojans, and yet at last fell upon his own sword and killed himself, because he could not have his will of Ulysses; and all about an old rusty buckler, taken from the enemy, which Ajax claimed as his right, in reward of his meritorious services, and the many scars he had received; but Ulysses overruled the council of war, which was called on purpose to decide this quarrel, and got the shield himself; for being a cunning plausible fellow, he pleaded, that though the courage and brave actions of Ajax deserved all due honour and acknowledgment, yet



the surprise of Troy, and ending the war, was only owing to his wit and contrivance, who deluded the Trojans with a wooden horse, in the belly of which lay a detachment of armed men; and these, after the horse was admitted into the city, came out of their nest in the dead of the night, and set fire to the houses, opening the gates also to the Grecian army.

If the Venetians could invent some such stratagem, perhaps there would be danger of their taking Constantinople; but till then, illustrious bazaar, there is no reason to fear these infidels; besides it will be very easy to dispossess them of that ominous island, and so dissipate the charm which has bewitched the seditious rabble. But I would counsel, that it be attempted in time, before the Venetians are got into the Hellespont with their navy; for there is no success against these infidels by sea. That element, it seems, is the wife of the Duke of Venice, being espoused with a ring and other solemn ceremonies, on a certain festival of the Nazarenes.

One would think also, that the English had made successful love to the sea, for their navies are always prosperous. We have fresh news come in of an encounter between them and the Spanish West India fleet, near the island of Teneriff, wherein there were seventeen of the Spanish ships sunk and burnt, and among them were five great galleons. They took from them an immense treasure of gold and silver, with other costly merchandize.

The French court rejoices mightily at this exploit, not in any real love to the English, but in hatred of the Spaniards; for between these two nations there seems to be an irreconcilable antipathy. Besides, the French have reasons of state for their joy, being in league with the English commonwealth.

That which renders this victory the more remarkable,

is, that it was obtained in a Spanish harbour, the port of Santa Cruz in Teneriff. Every one extols the English commander for a very brave person; his name is Blake. I am the more particular in this relation, because thou art expert in marine affairs, having had the command of the invincible Ottoman Armada.

There is a post newly come in from Germany, who informs us, that the King of Sweden and Prince Ragotki have taken the strong fort of Brzelki Litenski from the King of Poland.

The Portuguese ambassador at this court presses the king with much earnestness to send aids to his master, in regard the Spaniards are actually entered into Portugal, and have taken Olivenza, a city of that kingdom.

I formerly acquainted the ministers of the Divan, that the King of Spain had caused all the people of his kingdom to be numbered; now I tell thee farther, that in order to carry on the war effectually against Portugal, this monarch has commanded the fifth man in every family to take up arms, and follow the campaign; at which rate they say he will have an hundred thousand men in the field.

In the mean time, all the discourse here at present is concerning the siege of Montmedi, a very strong place in Flanders. It was invested by the French army on the 13th of this moon, under the command of the Marschal de la Ferté, Saucterre.

France has sent a great many brave generals into the field this summer; and I perceive the bias of the Ottoman empire are not like to carry at home. God inspire thee, and thy equals, with a resolution which knows no medium between victory and a glorious death.

Paris, 26th of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1657.

DE LA FERTÉ SAUCTERRE.

## XVII.—To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.

THE beginning of thy letter surpris'd me with wonder, when I read that a chias from the Grand Seignor, the sovereign of sovereigns, lord of three empires, and five-and-twenty kingdoms, should have the dishonour not to find admittance within the walls of Vienna, And that in a time when the Germans have no reason to provoke a foreign war, being sufficiently embarras'd with domestic troubles; but when I read farther, and perceived that no ambassador, not even of the Christian princes, has any more privilege at this juncture, and that it is an established law of the empire thus to reverence the majesty of their deceased sovereigns, and consult the safety of the next election, I ceased to resent this any longer as an indignity to our great master, and only concluded it to be some mystery of the Austrian state.

It is an argument of profound respect to the imperial ghost, that the churches are all hung with mourning throughout the hereditary dominions, and that no merriment is permitted either in the temples or elsewhere; no jollity or mirth till the funeral obsequies are performed, and the body of Cæsar is consign'd to the place of its everlasting repose.

As to the quarrel between the Duke of Bavaria, and Prince Palatine, about the vicariate, there is much to be said on both sides; and it ought to be a thing indifferent to thee and me, which of these two gets the victory. Yet for the sake of truth I will tell thee in short what I have collected out of the journal of Carco, thy predecessor, and out of other memoirs, as they came to my hands.

It appears then, that by the golden bull of Charles IV. this dignity was declared inherent in the Palatinate

family, in right of their possession of that principality, and that it had been so for many ages, even before there were any electors established in the empire. It is upon this ground the present Elector Palatine claims it. But on the other side, it is as manifest, that when Maximilian, the father of the present Duke of Bavaria, was invested with the electoral [dignity, it was inserted in the imperial bull, that the vicegerency of the empire, during an interregnum, should henceforth belong to that family. Yet this grant was again disannulled by the late pacification at Munster; and so the business is left in dispute between these two families. He of Bavaria trusts to his strength and riches, being also backed by the ecclesiastical princes; whilst the other only confides in the justice of his cause, the right of unquestionable inheritance.

Leaving, therefore, these grandees to prosecute their several claims, I will tell thee what makes the freshest noise in this city, is an attempt which the Prince of Conde made lately on the town of Calais, a sea-port of this kingdom. He had received certain intelligence, that the governor had sent out the best part of the garrison to fortify Ardres, a place not far from Calais, and supposed to be in great danger; upon this news, the prince marched with great expedition, designing to surprize Calais by night; but he was discovered before he came near them; and the inhabitants taking up arms, appeared on the walls and ramparts to welcome him, so that he was forced to retire again with the loss of near a thousand men.

Here are two men come out of England, that pretend to be prophets, foretelling the downfall of the pope, whom they call antichrist, a beast, a dragon, and I know not how many other titles. One of them is gone to Rome, to tell the holy father to his face what is like to befall

him. The French court looks upon them as madmen, and nobody can esteem them better if they go to Rome, where they will infallibly fall into the hands of the inquisition, which thou knowest is a hell upon earth. Thy brother Adonai felt the smart of it, only for two or three words uttered in contempt of their religion; and though he was not condemned to death, yet he suffered a tedious imprisonment, till at length the plague released him both from that and the chains of this mortal life.

Nathan, if he had died by the stroke of the executioner, or by fire, the common death of those who rail at the Roman faith, I could not pronounce him a martyr, unless it were to his own folly and rashness; since he was not placed there to make profelytes, either to the law of Moses or Mahomet, but to penetrate into the secret transactions of the followers of Jesus.

Thy business is the same at Vienna; pursue that with alacrity, and God shall protect thee from all adversity.

Paris, 9th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1657.

XVIII.—To MELEC AMER.

I WELCOME thy return to the earth again; for it appears by thy letter that thou hast been in the other world. It were to be wished, thou wouldst favour the living with a journal of thy travels and observations among the dead; Those regions of silence would afford matter of noise enough to mortals, that are always greedy of foreign news. Perhaps if thou wouldst communicate the remarks thou hast made during that ramble of thy soul, we might find out some method of correspondence between our world and that invisible state; we might contrive a way to send dispatches to our friends, and to re-

ceive their answers again; or at least we might make some useful discoveries in that empire of shadows.

But, tell me seriously, dost thou think it was any more than a trance or dream that has happened to thee, such as frequently falls out in melancholy constitutions? I once informed Cara Hali the physician of such an accident as this not far from Paris: It was of a man that had lain five-and-thirty hours as dead in all human appearance, and so given over by the physicians; yet after that period, he recovered his senses again, and told strange things to those that were about him. Surely these are but the slumbers of the soul; and death itself is but a deeper sleep, when it causes the dissolution of the body. Doubtless men awake again in some other active state; for as a flame of fire is equally disposed to embody itself in the fat of flesh or fish, in oil, wax, sulphur, or any proper vehicle, and as soon as it is extinguished in one, will readily translate itself successively to all the rest, if they be within the sphere of its activity (as the western philosopher speaks); so is the spirit or flame of life always in a posture of transmigration. For aught we know, he that is a king this hour, may be a peacock the next, and within a few days be served up at his successor's table as a royal dish.

But not to insist too much on these secrets, I will relate to thee a passage not unlike that thou hast experienced.

It is recorded in the writings of an authentic pen, the manuscript of an ancient Arabian, that Al' Rashid, emperor of the faithful, had many famous physicians about him; among the rest, he highly esteemed Saleh Eb'a Nahali, an Indian, for recovering one of his near kinsmen out of such a condition as I suppose thou hast been in. That kinsman was very dear to the emperor, who

was sitting at a feast when news was brought him that he was dead. The emperor, extremely troubled to hear this, burst forth into tears, and caused the table to be taken away. Then Jafer Ep'u Yahya, one of his confidants, immediately desired that Saleh the Indian physician might visit the corps of his dead relation, who went accordingly, and having felt his pulse, and considered him well, he returned to the emperor, and said, "Cease to mourn, my lord, commander of the faithful; for if this man be dead, and I do not restore him to life again, may I be divorced from all my wives for ever."

He had scarce made an end of saying this, when a second dispatch came to the emperor, from those who were about his kinsman, assuring him, that he was really departed this life.

Then Al' Rashid began to curse the Indians, and their ignorance: But Saleh persisted in this assertion, crying out with some vehemency, "Be not incredulous, O emperor of the faithful, nor suffer thy kinsman to be buried, till I have been with him again, for assuredly he is not dead; I will show you something that is admirable." Al' Rashid, pacified with these words, took Saleh along with him to visit the supposed dead person.

As soon as they came into his chamber, the Indian took a needle and thrust it between the nail and the flesh of his left thumb; then the entranced snatched up his hand toward his mouth; at which Saleh cried out, "Now, my lord, comfort yourself; for dead men are not to be sensible of pain." After this, he blew up a powder into his nose, upon which, in a few minutes, the patient sneezed; and sitting upright in his bed, spoke to Al' Rashid, kissing also his hand. The emperor asking him, "How he found himself?" he replied, "Benefactor of mankind, I have been in the sweetest sleep that

ever I remember fell on me in my life ; only I dreamed that a dog came and bit me by my left thumb, the pain of which awaked me." With that he showed him the mark of the needle and the blood ; adding, " Surely it was no dream, but a truth, for I feel it yet." The emperor was extremely pleased with his Indian physician, and did him great honour. His kinsman also, whose name was Ibrahim, lived many years after this, and was made governor of Egypt, where he died and was buried.

The eastern physicians have been famous in all ages, and are now much in esteem among the Franks, who addict themselves to study the sciences. Here are some very learned physicians in these parts, and not a few ignorant ones, who serve as foils to set off the lustre and fame of the others. Every province and city in France swarms with them, and they all find employment either to kill or cure. The Nazarenes live very intemperately, and fall into abundance of diseases, whereof the East is wholly ignorant ; therefore it is necessary for them to be well stocked with physicians. Yet it was satirically observed by a certain French lord, that in a town not far from his palace, the inhabitants were all healthy long-lived men, till a certain empiric came and took up his residence there, for then they began to sicken and die apace. But this may be an invidious remark. The Arabian proverb says, " No man is a good physician, but he that is born such ;" meaning, that some are naturally disposed and fitted to this science. Indeed, I have known admirable cures performed by men who never studied in academies, or could answer three questions in anatomy ; nay, some women have a gift of this nature, and are very fortunate in their practices. But when all is done, the beasts are most happy, who are all their own physicians by instinct.



Melec, I wish thee such a state of health as needs no medicines: But if it be thy misfortune to fall into Parmenides's indisposition, I counsel thee to make use of the advice given him by a philosopher, who, when Parmenides complained of a pain in his stomach, and asked his advice, bid him use such and such confections and electuaries; the other replied, "He had made trial of them all, and many more, yet found no ease." Then said the philosopher, "Turn poet, for they generally have good stomachs."

Paris, 9th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1657.

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#### XIX.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

COURIERS upon couriers are come to this city with the joyful news that Montmedi is surrendered to the French; for which the whole body of the parliament, and city of Paris, the chancellor of the kingdom, with Cardinal Antonio Barberini and all the ecclesiastics, went to the grand mosque or temple, where *Te Deum* was sung this afternoon, with a pompous solemnity; and now whilst I am writing, there is such a confused noise of great guns, ringing of bells, and shouts of people, that one would think it were enough to wake the very dead, and make them start from their graves, to inquire what is the matter.

The truth of it is, this place is counted one of the strongest in Europe, and the inhabitants were not insensible of it when they made their conditions of honour with the king; and therefore we need not wonder at the excessive joy of the French.

When the keys were delivered to the king by the de-

puties of the town, one of them in the name of the rest made this following address :

“ Sire, We should have had just reason to complain of fortune, and accuse ourselves of cowardice, if we had surrendered this impregnable fortress to the arms of a prince less glorious and puissant than your majesty ; since our very walls are of sufficient strength to defend us, without taking up arms, against a power inferior to yours. But in regard it is the will of Heaven that we must change our master, we rejoice to fall into the hands of so invincible and generous a monarch ; and we hope, Sire, that your majesty will show us the more favour, for having used our utmost efforts to conserve an inviolate fidelity to the Catholic king, who but yesterday was our master.”

This was spoken with so graceful an action, and such a becoming frankness, that the king, being mightily pleased with them, made them this answer : “ Yes, I shall always remember that your constancy deserves my esteem ; and now considering you as my subjects, I will bestow such privileges on this city, as shall oblige you to manifest no less courage and zeal for my service than you have done for the Catholic king.”

And to evidence that he has equal sentiments of gratitude and esteem for his officers, by whose courage and conduct this important place is come under his obedience, the king has bestowed the government of it on the lieutenant-general of his armies, who was present at the siege, and was shot in seven places of his body ; They call him the Marquis of Vandù. He has signalised his valour in sixteen sieges and battles, being marked all over with scars, the glorious characteristics of an indefatigable and fortunate hero.

It is fit the divan should be informed of all such passa-

ges, not to instruct them what to do in the like cases, (for they are perfectly wise) but that these examples may be registered as spurs to virtue and magnanimity of spirit; for it cannot be supposed that the emperor of the true believers will come short of these infidel kings in rewarding his faithful and undaunted slaves.

Mareschal de Ferté Seneterre has also had his share in the caresses and acknowledgments of the king and the whole court.

This success has given a great damp to the Spaniards, who begin to retire as fast as they can from the neighbourhood of the French armies. On the other side, these are full of vigour and brisk resolutions, resolving not to end the campaign without some farther attempts in Flanders.

They creep by degrees into the very heart of that province, which is ever like to be the stage of war, so long as the King of Spain has one town left in it. It is a very rich country, abounding in all the desirable productions of nature; and the people are very industrious to learn and improve whatsoever is profitable in art. All their unhappiness lies in this, that they are not able to protect themselves, and subsist independent of one or other of the neighbouring crowns; so that whenever these sovereigns fall out, these poor people are miserably oppressed with armies; and in this case their friends many times give them as much trouble as their enemies; nay, it is difficult to determine which are their enemies, and which their friends; for, to whatsoever master they are subject, he drains their coffers of money by taxes and contributions, besides the intolerable vexation of quartering unruly soldiers, who commit a thousand insolencies unpunished.

Poland is at this time in as bad a condition; between

the armies of Sweden, Austria, Brandenburg, Muscovy, Transylvania, and the forces of King Casimir.

The son of the deceased emperor has sent a great army to the aid of that unfortunate monarch; and it is confirmed on all hands that they have laid siege to Cracow; whilst his ambassador is negotiating with the Elector of Brandenburg, to draw him off from the Swedish interest. This is like to prove a war of long continuance if the plague do not make peace, which rages in these parts, and destroys many thousands more than the sword or gun. The Muscovites have combated with this distemper above these two years; the Grand Duke being forced to fly with his army, like vagabonds, before this inexorable conqueror, which gives no quarter.

In the mean time, I hear ill news from Candia, where, they say, the mussulmans have, in a late attempt on that city, lost above four thousand men, with four-and-thirty ensigns, and a considerable treasure. These infidels have also taken and destroyed, this summer, above thirty ships of Barbary, and as many more of Constantinople, Smyrna, Aleppo, Scanderoon, &c.; on board of one of which they seized the yearly revenue which comes to the Grand Seignior from Scanderoon; and out of another they have taken the revenue of Rhodes, killed a thousand true believers, took half that number captives, and released abundance of Christian slaves: In a word, they have taken out of the several vessels which fell into their hands an immense treasure of silver, gold, and precious stones.

These continual successes of the Nazarenes would tempt one to think that this war was unjustly commenced by Sultan Ibrahim, and therefore unhappily carried on by his glorious successor Sultan Mahomet. Pardon the effect of melancholy, benign minister, if it be a crime

to think, that the Creator of all things is angry with those who violate their solemn word and oath. Thou knowest the whole story of this war, and the first occasions of it. I say no more.

They have a proverb here in the West, "That the voice of the people is the voice of God." And though I approve not the practice of those who make use of this popular aphorism to foment seditions in a state, yet I cannot but own there is a great deal of reason in it, and it may be verified in the present circumstances of Constantinople.

Thou observest that the soldiers are mutinous, and unwilling to serve any longer in this unfortunate war; thou findest the merchants, and in general all sorts of people, discontented and factious; the avenues to that sanctuary of the world are blocked up by the Venetians, so that neither corn, nor other necessary provisions can be brought in to supply the wants of so many hundred thousands of people. In a word, thou seest the public calamities have made them almost desperate; they care not what they do: Peace with the Christians is the word every where, or else each impertinent mechanic will preface ruin to the Ottoman empire.

May God inspire thee and the other ministers of the divan, in this calenture of the state, to apply such remedies as may prevent the inconveniencies of a domestic war, which is always more fatal to a government than a foreign invasion.

Paris, 17th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1657.

## XX.—To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.

Now thou givest me some solid hopes of a convert. Thy letter has raised my expectation, since it is not penned in a style full of scruples and insignificant doubts, which would be endless; nor yet does it favour of hypocrisy and dissimulation, as if thou intendedst only to mock me and my faith, and still continue thyself an infidel; but it abounds with very fair concessions, articles of reason and honour on thy side; only expecting from me a true and authentic account of our Holy prophet's life, and of the miracles which can be produced in confirmation of his prophetic office. Thou wouldest fain see if any thing happened of this kind to the messenger of God, parallel to the stupendous wonders which recommended Moses your lawgiver to the world, as the undoubted oracle of Heaven.

I protest there is no fault to be found in this demand; for it is but reason, that he who assumes the character of a prophet, should be distinguished from impostors by some evident signs and wonders: Yet it is needless to make an exact parallel, because the occasions of Moses's miracles were different from those of Mahomet, the seal of the prophets. Your lawgiver had a commission and power given him to work miracles when he pleased; whereas ours declared that he was not sent to work miracles, but to preach the unity of the divine essence, the resurrection of the dead, the joys of paradise, and the torments of the damned.

Yet, lest the unbelieving world should doubt the truth of his mission, from his very birth his life was graced with many supernatural favours: His mother bore him without the least pain of body or mind, and as soon as he breathed the vital air, he spoke with an audible voice,

saluting his mother, and adding, "I profess there is only one God, and that I am his apostle." He was also circumcised by nature, coming into the world without his prepuce. At the same hour, the devils were forbid to ascend above the orb of the moon; and four voices were heard from the four corners of the square temple; the first saying, "Proclaim, the truth is risen, and all lies shall return into hell." The second uttering, "Now is born an apostle of your own nation, and the Omnipotent is with him." The words of the third were, "A book full of illustrious light is sent you from God." And the fourth voice was heard to say, "O Mahomet, we have sent thee to be a prophet, apostle, and guide to the world."

When he was about four years old, accompanying the sons of his nurse into the field, the blessed child retired into a cave, at the foot of the mountain Uriel, to pray; when the archangel Gabriel appeared to him, and said, "Bismillahi rrahmani rrahimi, &c. In the name of God, compassionate and merciful, O child greatly beloved, I am sent to displant from thy heart the root of evil; for thy ejaculations made the gates of paradise fly open." The young resigned one said, "The will of thy Lord and mine be done." Then the angel opened his breast with a razor of adamant, and taking out his heart, squeezed from it the black contagion, which was derived from Adam; and having put the child's heart in its place again, he blessed him, and retired to the invisibles.

From that time the young favourite of Heaven grew up and prospered in all things, having the smiles of God and man. He was under the tuition of his uncle Abu Taleb, who discerning the marks of an immense soul in his young nephew, was more solicitous for his welfare

than if he had been his son. His fortune being low in the world, he had no other way to provide for his illustrious charge than by placing him as a factor to Chadijah, a widow, of the same tribe with Mahomet, which was the noblest among the Arabians; besides she was very beautiful and rich, and there wanted not hopes that in time she might become Mahomet's wife.

That which chiefly encouraged them to this was a vision of Chadijah, every where talked of in those parts; for she had divulged it herself, long before Mahomet became her servant, or his uncle had any thoughts of thus disposing of him. "The sun seemed to leave his heaven, and come down to her house, from whence he dispersed his beams through Arabia, Egypt, Persia, and, in fine, through the whole earth." This vision had made a deep impression on the mind of Chadijah, and she could not rest till she had told it to a certain famous sage in those parts, who had great skill in astrology, and other mysterious sciences, and was celebrated for the integrity of his manners. As soon as he heard the contents of her vision, he said, "In the name of God, O widow, enter into thy bath, and prepare thyself with the necessary purifications; for thou shalt shortly be married to the greatest prophet in the world." And when she asked the astrologer, "What was the country, tribe, and name of her next husband?" he told her, "He was an Arabian of Mecca, of the tribe of the Coreis, and that his name was Mahomet."

As yet the prophetic widow knew nothing of the nephew of Abu Taleb; but thou mayst imagine she felt strange passions, when his uncle afterwards recommended him to her service; and she knew that he was the man in whom the astrologer's character was verified, as to his country, tribe, and name; for Mahomet was the son of



Abdalla, who descended from the Bani Hasehim, who were the noblest family in the tribe of the Coreis. Who can express her sentiments, when she saw the beautiful youth making his first addresses to her as an humble slave, whom she believed Heaven had ordained for the partner of her bed ! With what a grace and becoming modesty did he receive the last instructions and farewell of his parting uncle ! However, she concealed her transports, and sent her beloved slave with a caravan into Syria, allowing him a noble pension.

In that journey there happened something very remarkable in honour of the admirable young man ; for at a certain place on the road, as he waited on the captain of the caravan to a synagogue of the Jews, no sooner had Mahomet set his foot over the threshold of the synagogue, but all the lamps therein were loosened from their chains, and fell down on the floor. All those of thy nation that were present, being astonished at the portentous accident, fell at the feet of the rabbis, desiring their advice in this amazing circumstance. They having performed the accustomed ceremonies and expiations, answered, " It is revealed in the traditions of the seniors, that at what time soever an Arabian, called Mahomet, shall be present at our solemnities, God shall remove the candlesticks out of their places. It is therefore most certain, that such a one is now among us ; let him not escape our hands, lest reproach and contempt come on Israel." But behold, whilst they were busy in searching for the cause of this prodigy, two angels conveyed Mahomet to Mecca, where he soon after married Chadijah.

It were easy to recount many more miracles in the life of the prophet ; such as that of the cloud overshadowing him, the eagle perching on his head when he was asleep, the trees and stones proclaiming him the apostle of God ;

and if we were to make parallels, I think the stupendous descent which the moon made at the prayer of the divine messenger, comes not far short of the celebrated disorder on Mount Sinai, when your law was delivered by Moses.

If thou requirest undoubted testimonies for truth of this miracle on our side, offer something that is unquestionable on thy own. We both equally confide in the different records of our nations, which were penned by men as liable to temptations, and errors of all sorts, as thou and I, and all that believe what they write; therefore, unless thou canst start some infallible authority to prove the eternal and universal obligation of your law, than I can to the contrary, thou liest under a manifest disadvantage; since I profess, with our holy prophet and all the mussulmans, that the Alcoran contains nothing repugnant to the law of Moses, but is only a more perfect and complete idea of the Divine will; and that as Moses was the lawgiver of the sons of Isaac, so Mahomet was the apostle of the sons of Ismael, and the seal of all the prophets.

Use thy own reason, and rather be of no religion than in the number of those to whom it shall be said at the last day, "Drink, ye worshippers of Ozair, and be damned for ever."

Paris, 10th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1657.

XXI.—*To DICHIEU HUSSEIN, Bassa.*

THERE has been a mighty quarrel of late between the French and Spanish ambassadors at the Hague about precedence. The occasion was this: One evening the French ambassador was riding in a coach, in a place

where the Spanish ambassador met him in another coach, and both striving for the upper hand, they met with their horses heads one against another, and so stood still. There was presently a tumult of people gathered about them; and the French being most respected, many gentlemen came into his side with swords and pistols, and all things seemed to portend a combat; but the magistrates having notice of this disturbance, sent some of the guards to keep the peace, and to defend the ambassadors from any attempts of the rabble. In the mean while, several great lords walked to and fro between the ambassadors, proposing expedients of accommodation; but it being at the very juncture when the French ambassador had received the news of the surrender of Montmedi, he would not in the least yield to any terms; so that at last the Spaniard was forced to drive out of the way, thinking it a matter of sufficient triumph that he had stopped the French ambassador so long.

There is a post come in from Denmark, which brings news of the total destruction of Itzchow by fire. This was a town belonging to the Danes, and was fired by the King of Sweden's order. The Danes are very unfortunate of late years; they make no figure in Europe. There is a period set to the grandeur of every kingdom and state, and the Danes were once very victorious and formidable; but now their monarchy declines apace to make way for the rising lustre of the Swedes.

By sea the Dunkirkers make a great noise: They have lately taken from the French twenty merchant vessels, and from the English near half that number; but if they have not better fortune than their neighbours, the French will take their city from them ere long. Every campaign makes a fair advance toward it. I sent an account already to the kaimacham of the surrender

of Montmedi, one of the most important places in Christendom. Now I acquaint thee, that St. Venant, which has not so great a character, yet considerable enough, has yielded upon articles. This was done on the 28th of the last moon. At this rate, the French priests will have little else to do but to sing Te Deum for their repeated successes and victories.

From Portugal we hear, that that court, to secure themselves the better against the Spaniards, have sent to implore the assistance of Morocco and Fez, which is much censured among the Nazarenes: Others say they are only messengers gone to buy up all the horses they can get in that country.

In the mean while, the King of France is taking all the politic measures he can for the empire of the West. His ambassadors in Germany appear with a magnificent train of three hundred men, and they style their master, "His Most Christian Majesty, King of France and Navarre, Sovereign Prince in Germany and Italy;" which last is looked upon as a fair step to the title of emperor.

The councils of the German court are not a little disturbed to hear that our invincible forces are approaching towards the confines of Hungary. It will put some stop to the designed election. Besides, they cannot agree among themselves about a successor.

The Queen Christina of Sweden is come back again into this kingdom, being frightened out of Italy a second time by the return of the plague.

There is a war commenced between the city of Munster and the bishop of that place, so that he has laid a formal siege to it, and presses them very close.

All this is of no such importance as the news that I receive from Constantinople, which assures me that the

mussulmans have retaken the isles of Tenedos and Lemnos, though with some loss of men.

I wish they could as easily drive the Venetians out of the Archipelago, and then the imperial city would have no longer reason to complain for want of bread.

Paris, 10th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1687.

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XXII.—To DIGNET OGLOU.

I KNOW not what is the matter, but most of my friends are of late grown strange to me; they write but seldom, and then their letters are full of reserves, as if they suspected my integrity; or, because that I am commanded to inform the divan of all criminal practices, therefore they are afraid to communicate their sentiments with the same freedom as formerly, though on themes no ways belonging to the state, but purely speculative, and the common discourse of all sensible men. Are you become more morose and rigid at Constantinople than you were twenty years ago? In those days I remember it was common in the public coffee-hans, for Mussulmans, Greeks, Curds, and Franks, or men of any other religion, to meet together, and vent their thoughts with liberty; no man being willing to be stigmatized with the character of a clown for taking offence at another's faith, though different from his own.

It was then esteemed a point of gallantry to favour the Christians of all sects, and let them talk and act as they pleased, provided they blasphemed not God or his prophets; and they themselves would have condemned any of their own party who should have been guilty of such an immorality and affront to the established religion of the mussulmans, and the general sense of mankind.

But why then is the same liberty retrenched now, and that among mussulmans who are intimate friends? Is it not now as lawful for us to converse with one another by letter, or any other way, as it was then to enter into dialogues with infidels? I would not encourage or imitate the bold and profane efforts of their wit, who deny the being of a God, or utter blasphemies against his messenger; the whole universe is an irrefragible testimony of an eternal and omnipotent nature; and the Alcoran is an evident proof of the sanctity and indispensable commission of our holy lawgiver: But I hope it is no crime to enter into speculations of things liable to controversy; at least I will venture to disclose to thee my thoughts, who art the most agreeable of all my friends. I tell thee, my dear Dgnet, it appears to me ridiculous, and like the quarrels of children, for mussulmans to wrangle about mere trifles in religion, and that the resigned to God should be zealous for the whimsies of men. One party believes the Alcoran is eternal, another says it is created. In my opinion they are both absurd affections; the first, because then it will follow that there are more eternals than one, which is a fair step to polytheism and idolatry; the second is only an impropriety of speech, for we do not usually say of any writing that it is created, but penned.

I can easily believe the manifold descents of Gabriel from Heaven, when he brought down the hundred and four sheets of science and faith; but whether Adam had only ten of these sheets, or one-and-twenty as some say, or whether his son Seth had but nine-and-twenty of them, or fifty, according to others, is not material according to my faith: It is possible Edris had no more nor less than thirty, and Abraham our father just ten of these divine manuscripts. Of this we are sure, that the

volume of the law was sent to Moses, the psalms to David, the gospel to Jesus the son of Mary, and the mighty alcoran to Mahomet the seal of the prophets.

It is as easy for me to believe the celestial pen, with which all these manuscripts were written, to be of some admirable substance; but why it should be made of pearls, rather than of diamonds, or any other jewels, I see no reason; or that it should be a journey of fifty years for the swiftest horse in Arabia to run from one end of it to the other: Yet if I have not faith enough for these things, I will not be angry with those that have. Let every man enjoy his fancy.

But I cannot be so indifferent when I hear men tell me, that God has a body like ours, with eyes, ears, nose, hands, tongue, and all other members, and organs of life, sense, speech, and motion; that he is subject to passions of love, hatred, anger, grief, and all the affections that are common to mortals: Yet thou knowest there is a sect of mussulmans who believe all this, and preach it to others with great assurance. What is this but to set up an idol in the place of God? For the original of all idolatry was the vain presumption of men, who represented the incomprehensible divinity under some common visible figure of men or beasts.

If we must assign a body to God, it would seem more rational to adhere to their opinion among the Sephatim, who say his body is infinite, uncircumscribed, and beyond all form. Neither is it of any import that the western philosophers assert it is of the essence of all bodies to be circumscribed and finite; since, though this may be readily granted true of particular bodies, yet must it ever be denied of the immense and universal body out of which the world is formed, unless they will allow it unlimited and interminate unbodied space, which is

more unintelligible and absurd. Doubtless, if the eternal Mind has a body, it is expanded wide as the endless ether, and equally present in all places; neither can this body be any more circumscribed, confined, or shut up in any place, than the light of the sun can be restrained within a room, or separated from its source by drawing of a curtain; for all the world is pervious to this infinite body, which is altogether indivisible into parts, even as that which we call a spirit. In a word, we must conceive it to be simple and uncompounded, the finest and fairest matter of the universe.

But if thou wilt have my opinion, all this is infinitely too low and narrow an idea of that eternal and most exalted Essence, that intellectual Beauty which no mortal eye has seen, no tongue or pen can describe, the smallest glimpse of whose ineffable majesty, falling on the thoughts of holy men and prophets, snatches away their souls in sacred passions and divine ecstasies, whilst their bodies are in the custody of the angel of death. At such times they are carried up through the seven heavens, beholding all their wonders, and the purple sea which divides the first heaven from the second; they pass by the orbs, where fire, hail, snow, and thunder are prepared, and kept as in reservoirs against the day of calamity, being guarded by spirits of vengeance, who are created to punish infidels; then they ascend to the fourth heaven, where dwell innumerable armies of holy ones; next to the fifth, where are the angels of intercession; then to the sixth, which is the residence of archangels, the inter-nuncios, or messengers of the eternal Majesty; and, last of all, they are introduced into the presence of the most sublime potentates and principalities, who wait before the recess of the Creator in the heavens above all hea-



vens, whose height transcends the power of created intellects to measure.

O Dgnet, when I have said all I can, it is nothing to the purpose ! for no words nor thoughts can reach that infinite above all infinity ; nothing but pure unbodied minds can have access to the skirts and borders of that endless region of light.

Therefore, let us not stretch our vain imaginations, nor greedily pry into those secrets which for ever fly from human thought ; but, keeping ourselves within the bounds of reason and sobriety, let us adore God, and believe his prophet, obey the law of cleanness and purity, without injuring man or beast ; and that is the way, if there be any, to ascend to the vision and enjoyment of that happiness, which at present is hid from us.

Paris, 5th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1657.

XXIII.—*To the AGA of the Janizaries.*

I RECEIVED the dispatch coming from valorous hands, an express perfumed with narcissus, full of honourable words, and exhibiting a command worthy of an Ottoman general. May the angel of fortitude conduct thee in all thy expeditions against infidels, rebels, and heretics.

Thy conceptions of the present state of Europe are very proper and lively ; yet in some things it is possible thou hast been misinformed. The affairs of Italy are inconsiderable, when compared with the more important wars of the North. That quarter is at present the theatre of the most remarkable actions ; yet the campaigns in Flanders this year have made some noise in the world.

But all the discourse at present is of the famous siege and taking of Fredericks-Ode by the Swedes. This is

a fortress belonging to the King of Denmark, and esteem-  
ed one of the strongest in Europe; yet it was taken by  
storm, wherein the Danes lost three-and-ninety principal  
officers, and about three thousand common soldiers, three-  
and-thirty colours, seven-and-seventy great guns of iron  
and brass, three hundred and eighty-two barrels of pow-  
der, forty thousand musket-bullets, six hundred grena-  
des, three thousand pikes, and two thousand two hun-  
dred suits of armour.

This victory makes the Swedes appear terrible to their  
enemies, and they are looked upon as the only flourish-  
ing nation in the North, as France is in the West. Yet  
to show that there is no unmixed happiness here below,  
their interests has been much lessened by the desertion of  
the Brandenburgers, who now seem to favour the cause  
of King Casimir,

That monarch had an interview lately with the Elec-  
tor of Brandenburg, at a place called Broomberg, where  
they embraced one another, banqueted together, and bu-  
ried all the memoirs of enmity in generous computations;  
for this is the way of the Northern princes of Europe,  
who live in so cold a climate that nothing less than a de-  
bauch of wine can thaw their frozen souls, and melt  
them into an obliging humour.

As for the state of England, I perceive thou knowest  
the character of Oliver, the new sovereign of that com-  
monwealth; yet I can inform thee that he begins to  
change his temper. There are persons in his court who  
give constant intelligence to the King of France of all  
his secrets; and so the exiled King of Scots could not  
suffice a candle to say passion but that usurper had know-  
ledge of it, so neither can Oliver have a dream but some  
spitiful Mercury carries the news into foreign countries.  
His sleep is interrupted with fearful visions of plots and

treasons against his life, which makes him change his bed five or six times a-night. They say he is metamorphosed from a hero to a perfect coward. And this is not the report of the multitude, who take things upon trust, but it is the sport of the French grandees, who wish well to the son of the late murdered English king.

I must be irregular in my method of writing, that I may oblige thee with military remarks. A more particular account of the storm of Fredericks-Ode is just come to my hands, wherein we are assured, that it was taken at the first assault, which much redounds to the honour of General Wrangle; and that the crown-marshal of Denmark, with many senators and grandees, fell by the edge of the sword; and that two thousand captives were driven yoked in couples like beasts, as an augmentation of the conqueror's triumph.

Thou wilt not be displeas'd at the little coherence and order of these memoirs, considering that it suits well enough with the subject; for I write *à l'espagnol*, as the French say, and so am oblig'd to entertain thee with broken detachments of news, from several parts, as occasion offers.

The Spaniards are stark mad for the loss of Mardike, which was taken by the English and French in the 9th moon, and all the garrison sent prisoners to Calais. They swear they will have this important place again, whatever it cost them. The Prince of Conde lies dangerously sick of a fever at Ghent; whilst Don John of Austria, labours under a malady of another nature, being much distressed for want of money to pay his soldiers. This is looked upon as a very bad symptom in a general of an army. The great city Orscow in Poland is surrendered by the Swedes to King Casimir. That monarch begins to

had a turn of his affairs, and it is thought he will draw half the princes of Europe into a league against the King of Sweden.

It will be of no great importance for thee to know, that the siege of Munster is raised, and a peace concluded between that city and their bishop; yet it is convenient, that this should be related to the ministers of the Divan, who are the judges of human events: Besides, in one of my letters, I mentioned this quarrel and siege.

Illustrious Aga, I have obeyed thy commands, in sending thee an abstract of all the most remarkable transactions in Europe, during the last three or four moons. I wish it were as agreeable to any of my friends to send me the news of our armies and navy.

But I am more obliged to strangers and infidels for the intelligence I have of the Ottoman affairs, than to any of the true believers.

Brave commander, may God preserve thee from the common vices of a soldier's life, and make thee as renowned as Cassim Hali, who was present in five-and-twenty pitched battles, received eight-and-forty wounds, and yet lived to the sixty-third year of his age.

Paris, 27th of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1657.

## B O O K IV.

LETTER I.—To CARA HALI, *Physician to the Grand Seignior.*

MOST of my letters to the grandees of the Porte carry news of war, sieges, and battles among the Christians. Now I will tell thee, who art my friend, I am at war

with myself; one potent passion takes the field against another; opposite armies of affections are embattled in my breast; my heart is blocked up; here lies interest entrenched, there honour displays its standard; one minute nature and self-preservation makes a sally, the next they are beat back by generosity and love: The worst of it is, that these contrary factions in the soul are so blended together by a secret correspondence, that it is almost impossible to discern which is which.

Wouldst thou know what the meaning of this is? I will tell thee in brief; I am in a controversy with myself, whether I had best die or live.

Wonder not at the expression, as if it were in any man's power to make this choice; since, according to the Mussulman faith, we cannot hasten or retard the moments decreed by fate. Assuredly predestination does not in the least interfere with what is called man's free-will: Every the most voluntary action of our lives complies as exactly with the appointment of eternal destiny, as the accidental fall of a tile of a house, or a more regular and constant descent of rain, snow, and hail, from the clouds. And for aught I know, we may as properly call it the free-will of a river, to run toward the sea, as for a man to pursue the various currents of his own reason or appetite; for so a fountain frequently divides itself into many streams, before it falls into the ocean, which is its centre; and man himself, notwithstanding the boasted freedom of his will, is as much confined to act, according to his principles, prepossessions, prejudices, passions, and habits, as the different rivulets issuing from the same spring are restrained each within the banks of its proper channel.

But not to entertain thee with more allegories, both thou and I, and all men, find ourselves violently carried away by certain inclinations, so forcible as no power of

our will is able to resist : Sometimes our love, hate, joy, grief, and so the rest of human passions, are as involuntary as the motions of our pulse. And though in the most important actions of our lives we generally form some regular design, as their scope and centre, yet we do many things without reflection, as musicians are said sometimes to play excellent tunes without so much as regarding or thinking what they are about ; by all which it is evident, that our will has little to do in the conduct of our lives. We, like all other creatures, act according to certain secret impulses of nature. The very same faculty which we call instinct in the beast, is no other than what we term reason, wisdom, knowledge, discretion, and forecast in ourselves ; and I think it is no solecism to say, that that was a prudent dog, who perceiving his master making ready a rope to hang him, slyly slipt away, and never came near him more.

Suffer me to make yet a farther digression, and ascribe it to fate ; for I am on a sudden strangely interrupted in my thoughts by a most furious tempest, a medley of hail, rain, lightning, and thunder, and this last, though not over noisy and loud, yet it was the most singularly terrifying that ever I heard in my life. There is a sort of thunder which they call the drum, because it approaches near the sound of that warlike instrument, making a lively fierce rumbling in the air, like the beat of an alarm ; there is another more surprising, like the roaring of cannons ; but this had a touch in it of the most harsh, affrightening, and irregular noises that ever shook the welkin.

I was possessed with a deep melancholy, as soon as I heard the horrid clatter begin, and saw the air darken apace, with a more than ordinary gloominess ; then I felt some religious passions struggling with my reason ; I was

full of fears, lest God was angry with me for my counterfeited life among the Christians; and imagined no less than that this tempest was raised on purpose to destroy me, and make me an example to all musfulmans, who dare deny the holy prophet, to serve the interest of the Grand Seignior, as much a mortal as themselves; or at least I concluded I should taste my share of the wrath of Heaven at this choleric juncture; nay, and all the philosophy I could muster together served but to raise my dismal expectations of the fatal blast; for I could not avoid thinking, that a wicked man is a magnet which naturally attracts the vengeance of Heaven, and that I being such in the highest degree, could not fail of having my soul scorched up at once to nothing, or metamorphosed to a fury (which is worse) by some surprising and inevitable flash; for to pass from this life by lightning, poison, or an earthquake, are the only deaths I fear.

I fell on my knees and face, addressing myself to God with the most humble and fervent devotion I was capable of; I made my application also to his prophet; I said and did all that I thought would procure a respite of the punishment I feared: At length, being tired and sick of too much prayer, I rose and sat down cheerfully, remembering I was a musfulman, and resigned to the will of destiny; considering also that I was an Arabian, of a noble stock, I resolved, if I must die, to prepare myself with a moderation worthy of my blood, that so I might go to the invisibles like the grandson of an emir.

Perhaps thou wilt impute this to vanity; but I esteem it a point of justice for a man to take care that he may live and die like himself, without degenerating from the virtue of his ancestors, or bringing a disgrace on the tribe to which he belongs; for though God has created

all men of the same mould, yet he has distinguished one family from another, by more than specific characters imprinted on them in their nativity, and has ennobled some mortals with peculiar qualities and innate perfections, which others are wholly strangers to; so there are others remarkable for hereditary vices.

Whether these things depend on the blood, or on the different circumstances of souls before they came into these bodies, is a question not soon resolved; but this I am sure of, that I find in myself both some virtues and vices, which I could never yet discover so oddly blended together in any other mortal. I am always campaigning on the frontiers of good and evil; yet my passions are not mercenary, and price can tempt me to treason or perfidy; I am master of a certain fastness of spirit, which no human charm is able to dismantle; my integrity cannot be warped by gold; and it is for this reason I a little value myself, which makes me sometimes inclined rather bravely to fall forth into the unknown world, than tarry in this, where I meet with nothing but contempt and disesteem from the slaves of him for whose sake I bear the fatigue of life. Surely, think I, wherever it be my lot to go, after my escape from this mortal state, the spirits of that region will be kind to me for the sake of my incorruptible trustiness; for they have intrigues as well as we, and consequently will be glad of faithful agents.

In a word, since all my zeal and loyalty is thought not to merit any reward in this life, I would fain try whether at least I may not deserve to be a ghost of honour, if there be any such distinctions in that world of spirits.

Paris, 27th of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1657.



II.—*To MUSTAPHA, Bassa.*

I SHALL acquaint thee with a late transaction in this kingdom, which I believe has but few examples. The *kaimacham* has already received a dispatch from me, wherein I signified the return of Christina Queen of Sweden into France! This princess, since her arrival at Fontainebleau, having discovered some secret treachery in one of her retinue, who was an Italian marquis, pronounced a formal sentence of death on him, which was accordingly executed on the 10th day of the 11th moon; by her own officers, in a gallery of her palace; after he had been warned of it by her express order, and had a confessor sent to him to prepare him for another world.

When this was done, she immediately sent a messenger to acquaint the French king with this action, and the reasons which induced her to it. Some of the courtiers at first persuaded him, that the queen's proceedings intrinched on his royal prerogative, he being the sole arbitrator of life and death within his own dominions, whereupon Monsieur de Chanut was sent to expostulate with her. I have formerly mentioned this person in some of my letters, when he was ambassador from this crown to Queen Christina, then reigning in Sweden. He is a gentleman of great abilities, and for that reason he has been employed in the most difficult negotiations with the states of Holland, and other countries.

Yet people censure variously; and the case has been referred to the doctors of the civil law, who pronounced this sentence in her favour, "That being an independent sovereign, and having the King of France's permission to reside in this realm, the rights of sovereignty could not be denied her over her own subjects: Such are to be

esteemed all that are in her service and take her pay, except the subjects of the state where she resides."

The swift execution of this queen's sentence on her servant, in part resembles the rigour of our eastern justice, which admits of no delays in punishing criminal persons, and removing traitors out of the way; neither is it to be diverted by any fear of after-claps. And though these western monarchs generally put no man to death without a formal process at law, yet sometimes they have leaped over this rule, and only give the word of command to some of their officers, and the business was done; as in the case of the Mareschal de Ancre, and the Duke of Guise; the one falling by a pistol bullet, the other by the stab of a dagger; and both in the king's own palace, surrounded with their servants and friends; and there was no other way for the crown of France to secure itself from the attempts of these dangerous men, who were grown to such a height, as to monarch it almost as much as their master.

Mighty bassa, the charms of sovereignty are very strong, creating envy and ambition in subjects, and jealousy in princes. It is not safe for an eminent grandee to appear too popular; for he that is invested with a diadem can never brook a rival, or one whom he has reason to suspect for such.

Paris, 15th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1658.

### III.—To MUSTARNA, *Berber Aga.*

THE Spaniards are all dissolved in joy for the birth of a young prince and heir of that declining monarchy. It is said that the king his father appointed a solemn festival throughout all his dominions, commanding his subjects to

celebrate it with the most exalted demonstrations of joy; and on that day he himself wore the ransom of kings in his apparel, the very diamonds and pearls in his hat being valued at three millions of gold, by which thou mayest guess at the rest.

He has also communicated this joyful news to all Christian princes and states, his friends and allies. And indeed he has some reason to make a noise of this good fortune, being an old man, and in all men's opinion not likely to have any more children.

His ambassadors in foreign countries endeavour to imitate their prince in all manner of magnificent triumphs, and particularly from Holland we have the following account: That on a certain day of this moon of January, Don Stephano de Gamara, the Spanish ambassador at the Hague, caused Te Deum to be sung with excellent voices and music, whilst fifty pieces of ordnance played continually; at night an hundred and fifty pitch barrels were lighted on several scaffolds in the streets, and all the windows in the Hague were illuminated with wax tapers; and these words were seen flaming in an artificial fire-work for two hours together:

ParVe, at Magne PHILippe,  
Prosperè, pròCèDe, et regna.

I need not explain this inscription to thee, who art versed in the Roman language, and wilt find that all the salt of these words lies in the capital letters pointing at the year wherein this young prince was born, viz. MDCLVII. except a little pun upon his name, which is Philip Prosper. On each side appeared the arms of the Spanish king, and underneath the Golden Fleece, so artificially contrived, that from it sprung fountains of divers kinds of wine, at which the multitude drank liberally for some hours, whilst many new coined pieces of

gold and silver were scattered among them out of the ambassador's windows. They were stamped with an olive tree, having this motto on one side :

*Crescente hac, Pax aurea crescet.*

And on the other side, a hand, with this inscription in a label :

*Dabit Populis Pacem.*

The French ridicule this latter motto, and say the King of Spain will ere long deserve the title of peace-maker, when he shall be forced to sue for it, not being in a condition to carry on a war.

Illustrious officer, I know thou art well versed in the Roman histories, having been educated under Achmet Lala, who was a learned man ; and it is probable thou art no stranger to the more modern relations of Europe, and the divers characters of the people that inhabit it ; yet give me leave to tell thee, that Rome, in all its victorious bravery, never saw firmer soldiers in a battle than the Spaniards are at this day ; but the French have finer wits, more money, and better fortune, and it is this makes them insult ; besides, destiny over-rules all things. Every kingdom and empire has its climacters, wherein it droops, declines, and at the grand critical period falls to ruin.

The Greeks had money enough when the great sultan Mahomet besieged Constantinople, but they had not wit to use it for their own preservation ; and so that city, the last considerable stake of the empire, was lost to the Ottomans, who soon after became masters of all the rest.

Thou hast wealth in abundance, and discretion to manage it : Slip no opportunities, but remember the old Arabian proverb, which says, " God has given whole

days to the fortunate, but to the unhappy he affords only some hours."

Paris, 17th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1658.

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IV.—*To PESTELI HALI, his Brother, Master of the Grand Seignior's Customs at Constantinople.*

I REMEMBER my promise, though it be late. Thou knowest I have many hindrances, and therefore wilt not tax me with feigning an excuse. However, thy letter came to me in a good hour, to put me in mind of these things, and to inquire of our mother's health, who still resides in this city.

I have said nothing of her since my first letter after her arrival at Paris: And to tell thee the truth, she has said little herself, being ignorant of the French tongue, and too old to learn it; therefore her chief conversation has been with Eliachim and me above these three years, for that Jew speaks indifferent good Turkish and Arabic.

If thou wouldest know how she has spent her time, it is divided between her devotions and her needle: She lives more recluse than a Christian nun, seldom or never stirring abroad, unless to take the air of the fields, and then shut up in a coach with her maid: In a word, her manner of living is a fit example for the French women, for in all things she observes the law of her education, and the modest customs of the East.

No argument can persuade her to change her Grecian garb, or dress herself after the loose mode of western females; neither will she eat or drink any where, but in the house of Eliachim, for fear of infringing the precepts of the Alcoran, and disobeying the messenger of God; for she esteems the diet of the Jews pure, and free from

pollution. In her pious and motherly zeal, she rebukes me for eating and drinking with infidels; and I have nothing to say in my defence, but the necessity I lie under of preventing suspicion, that so I may serve the sultan with greater success, and that I have the musti's dispensation for this and many more irregularities. When she hears this, she lifts up her eyes to Heaven, lays her hand upon her breast, and appears resigned; yet shakes her head, and seems to pity my case; not without some reflections on the corruption of the times, the impiety of the seraglio, and want of zeal for the holy prophet.

She has her health to a miracle; and, excepting the first two moons after she came to Paris, I never heard her complain of the least indisposition. It is possible the change of air, with the inconveniences of travelling so far by sea and land, might incommode her at first. She was for a while troubled with rheuma, obstructions, and a dysentery; but she soon overcame these distempers, and has ever since been perfectly well.

We often discourse together of thee and thy travels in the East; sometimes I read part of thy journal to her, which affords her infinite delight. She congratulates herself, and thy good fortune in escaping so many perils and deaths, as every where threaten a stranger; and takes a particular delight to hear thy adventures with the Indian lady, at the court of Raja Hulacu. Thou mayest be assured our mother bears a singular affection to thee, for we never meet without wishing thee in our company; she rejoices mightily to hear of thy prosperity and advancement in the favour of the Grand Seignior and his principal ministers, wishing thee every day a new step of honour and interest: Thou mayest also rest satisfied that Mahmut comes not short of the affection he owes to such a brother.

At other times we talk of our cousin Housf, who is now in the frozen regions of the North. His itinerary memoirs are also very pleasant, and we pass some hours in reading and comparing them with the dispatches which I frequently receive from Mehemet, an exiled eunuch in Egypt; for Housf is more large in his description of that country, and his remarks on its antiquities, than any other part of Africa: Yet he says enough of all that southern quarter.

As to what I promised to inform thee concerning the pyramids, mummies, and other singularities of Egypt, know that our kinsman Housf is a great critic, and gives the lie to Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo, Pliny, and other writers of Greece and Rome; neither will he consent in all things to our Arabian histories.

He says the pyramids are neither so high, nor does their basis take up so much ground, as is reported by the ancients; he laughs at those who affirm they cast no shadows at noon, having experienced the contrary when the sun was in Capricorn: And we may believe him in this, on good grounds; for it is recorded of Thales Milesius, who lived about two thousand years ago, that he took the height of these pyramids by their shadows.

There are three of these admirable structures not far from Cairo, and about eighteen more in the deserts of Libya. It is generally supposed that they were built for sepulchres of the Egyptian kings, some of them before the flood, the rest after. There are not wanting historians, who assert the greatest of the pyramids to be the tomb of Seth, the son of Adam.

Housf was within this mighty fabric, and attests that after he and his company had descended and ascended through certain galleries, they came at last to a square chamber, walled about with pure Thebaic marble, in the

middle of which was a chest of the same stone, which, when struck with the foot, sounded like a musical instrument. It is believed that in this chest was laid the body of the king who built that pyramid.

The ancient Egyptians were of opinion, that even after that which we call death, or the separation of the soul and body, there were certain arts to retain them together, if not in so strict and intimate an union as before, yet in a very familiar correspondence for many ages; so that the soul should always take delight to hover about the body, and to exercise its faculties in the place where that was reposed.

For this reason, in the first place, they took out the bowels, and whatsoever was most liable to corruption; and, having washed the empty belly with wine of palms, mixed with aromatic powders, they stuffed it with myrrh, cassia, and many costly confections, and then sewed it up; after this, they purified the whole body with nitre, and having drawn out the brains by the nostrils with a hook, they filled up the skull with melted gums; and last of all, they swathed up the whole body in silk, smearing it over with rich mixture of bitumen, spices, and gums, and so delivered it to the kindred to be laid up in the sepulchre.

These were the preparations they made to court the presence of the soul, by rendering the body for ever sweet and incorruptible; and that the majesty of royal ghosts might never be interrupted or violated by the neighbourhood of vulgar spirits, or the ruder approach of mortals, kings built these magnificent piles, as the palaces of their last repose. It is therefore they were erected in deserts and unfrequented places, and in such a form as was esteemed the most durable and secure from the injuries of time, the assaults of the elements, and



from the common fate of all human enterprises; each stone of a prodigious bulk, and riveted to the next with a bar of iron, which, with the strength and invincible fastness of the cement, renders it a thing impossible for any one of these pyramids to be demolished, though all mankind were set to work for many successive generations.

Al Mamun the caliph of Babylon attempted to do it, but in vain; for after he had set his men to work, and been at vast expences, they made but one small breach, so inconsiderable, that being made sensible it would exhaust his treasures to remove but the hundredth part of the pyramid, he desisted, full of wonder at the wisdom of the founders.

If it be true that the soul may, by such allurements as these, be prevailed on to remain with the body in its sepulchre, and that a man's future happiness consists in this, I should myself admire and imitate those Egyptian sages; I would in my lifetime build me a small mausoleum, according to my ability, and order, in my last will and testament, that my body be embalmed and condited for a perpetual duration: But if none of these arts can alter the decrees of destiny, or force an immortal spirit from ranging where it pleases, I must conclude with Pliny, that this celebrated wisdom of the Egyptians was no other than glorious folly, and all the magnificence of their kings, in building such costly sepulchres, but royal waste.

They themselves, in thus cautiously providing to secure the soul's abode with the body after death, tacitly owned, that by the course of nature it would immediately pass into some other; nay, the transmigration of souls was an established doctrine in Egypt. How then could they be so blind as to imagine a dead carcass, however

perfumed and fenced against corruption, was more inviting than an embryo formed to live? or that it was more eligible for the soul to be imprisoned in a dark dungeon, (for no better are the insides of the pyramids) than to enjoy the light of the sun, moon, and stars, and the various sweets of the elements? Brother, in my opinion, it were better to be a bird, a worm, a fly, or any living thing, than to be thus immured for many ages, and have no other companion but an old salted mummy.

Isouf has made some remarks on the river Nile, to which, he says, Egypt owes not only its corn and fruits, but also the very soil which brings them forth; for every year, at the time of the inundation, that river brings along with it from Ethiopia, or some other regions through which it passes, abundance of slime and mud, with which it covers all the land of Egypt, leaving it behind at the decrease of the waters; so that the soil of Egypt is borrowed from other countries: And if this be true, for aught we know, the place of its situation may be borrowed from the sea, according to the opinion of some ancient philosophers.

Herodotus, Pliny, and others, were of this persuasion, grounding their conjectures on the nearer approaches of the continent to the island Pharos, from the time of Homer, who exactly calculated its distance; and they concluded, that the immense quantities of slime which the Nile transports from the mountainous regions of Africa, might, in the space of two myriads of years, have filled up all that part of the sea, which is now firm land, and called Egypt.

If this be true, it seems to be very strange that the Egyptians should boast of greater antiquity than any other nation in the world, though their country itself be the youngest of all the regions on earth, an abortive spot

of ground, hatched by a river in the depths of the sea, and ever since cherished by that river, as by a parent or nurse, which ceases not to convey to it yearly a convenient proportion of aliment, whereby the country itself grows in bulk, and the inhabitants are maintained. O admirable providence of nature, who can penetrate into thy mysterious conduct? O Egypt, abounding in prodigies and wonders! where the land and water, with the other elements, conspire to render thee all over miraculous.

Dear Pesteli, I am transported when I think of that region, and could relate a thousand more passages both out of Ifouf's memoirs, and from the mouth of others who have travelled thither to observe so many miracles; but I believe thy patience will be sufficiently tired with the length of this letter; besides, my mother is just come to visit me, and desires me to recommend her unfeigned affections to thee.

Be assured also, that Mahmut loves thee with the integrity of a man, and the tenderness of a brother; and he serves thee in all things without repining.

Paris, 17th of the 12<sup>th</sup> Moon, of the Year 1658.

#### V.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

THE Venetians are very angry for the loss of Tenedos, and not without reason, for that island is a delicate spot of ground, abounding in rich wines, and other products of nature; besides it commands the avenue of the shipping city, the refuge of mortals.

They variously relate the manner of its being taken from them, by the arms which no earthly power is able to resist; endeavouring, in all their rumours, to disguise the truth as much as they can, and misrepresent the

bravery of the Ottomans, that so the actions of their own generals may make the greater figure.

These Nazarenes have a bad cause, and therefore are compelled to make use of shifts and equivocations to support it: They are quite degenerated from the integrity of the primitive followers of Jesus. In a word, they make good the character of the ancient Candiots, of whom a certain poet says, "They are thorough-paced liars, ravenous beasts, and gluttonous drones."

It is believed in these parts, that when the Venetians quitted the island, they departed not without revenge, setting fire to a mine, and blowing up several hundreds of Mahometans into the air.

However, they have for ever proscribed and excommunicated Girolamo Loredan, and Giovanni Contarini, in whose custody the chief fortresses of the island were, accusing them of cowardice and treachery; offering also two thousand sequins to any that seizes on them within the dominions of Venice, and three thousand to him that kills them in another country.

I know it is in the power of the all-commanding Porte to protect these exiles if they are within the territories of our sovereign, much more if they shelter themselves in that sanctuary of the distressed: But thou and the other supreme ministers are best able to judge whether these infidels merit so great a favour.

Perhaps their case may be like that of Nadaft, governor of Buda, when Solyman the Magnificent besieged that city; for Nadaft was a man of invincible courage and fidelity, but was betrayed by the soldiers, who bound him in chains, and delivered up the city and castle to the victorious sultan. That brave hero, understanding their treachery, and the resolution of Nadaft, set him at liberty, and presented him with noble gifts; but commanded

the perfidious garrison to be cut in pieces, a due reward of their treason : For though princes often make use of traitors to serve their own designs, yet when the work is done, they commonly pursue the hated instruments with the effects of a just contempt and indignation.

Plutarch the Greek historian abounds with instances of this nature, so does Herodian and other Roman authors; but no example of punishment in this kind seems so proportionate, regular, and ingenious, as that which Brennus King of the Gauls caused to be inflicted on a virgin of Ephesus, who, when he besieged that city, promised to deliver it into his hands, on condition that his soldiers would bestow on her all their ornaments of gold which they had plundered in the wars of Asia, and wore about them as trophies; for when she had performed her contract, the wise general, to do his part, caused this virgin to sit down on the ground, and then every soldier in his army casting his plate into her lap, she was oppressed with the insupportable weight, and buried alive in a heap of gold.

I do not mention this as if the like were due to the Venetian captains; I refer the judgment of such things to my superiors, ministers of the blessed sanctuary of mankind.

It is possible the visers of the bench thought me dead or turned renegado, because they have not received any news from me these five moons: But I tell thee, neither men nor devils can corrupt the faith of Mahmut; but, by the God of my vows, there is is not a more trusty man in the universe.

All the reason of my silence was the height of the waters, which seemed to threaten the earth with a second deluge. Germany was a sea, and Flanders a lake for above three moons together, so that it was impossible for

the post to travel. There were seen, also strange spectres of fire in the air; and the people of Brabant were alarmed with uncouth noises in the elements.

Perhaps, illustrious Kajmacham, these are the last preparations to the grand cholic of nature, when wind, water, and fire, shall strive to turn this world into its old chaos.

Paris, 3d of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1658.

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VI.—*To SOLYMAN, his Cousin, at Constantinople.*

**M**ORE melancholy still! Wilt thou have no compassion on thy exiled uncle, but harangue him to death with thy religious jargon? Believe me, thy letters of this kind are as irksome to me as the continual din and babbling of boys is to a poor weary pedagogue. I forbid thee not to write to me, and that as often as thou wilt; it is a comfort in my banishment to hear from those of my blood; but let me beg of thee to alter both thy theme and style; leave spiritual things to the mollahs and imams, and let thy thoughts be taken up in things belonging to thy trade: In that be as inquisitive as thou canst; bend thy mind wholly to make new discoveries and improvements in that, and it will turn to thy advantage. At thy hours of leisure I counsel thee to read histories, and sometimes go into company; there is much to be gained by conversing with men of sense: Such will serve as mirrors, wherein thou mayst behold humanity in its proper figure, and the deformity of that vizard, with which error and superstition disguise our nature; they will correct thy mistakes without putting thee to a blush; wit and reason shall flow from their tongues, as soft harmonies

breathe from the pipes of an organ, which cheer the spirits, and serene the heart that was clouded with sadness.

The imperial city is full of such, both natives and strangers; cull them out from the mixed multitude, and make them thy companions, without regarding the difference of religion, whether they be Mussulmans, Franks, Armenians, Jews, or others. Above all things shun the society of bigots, and number not thyself among those who are opinionated because they profess the true faith; for what signifies that if their lives be vicious? I tell thee they are worse than the infidels. Give no heed to fortune-tellers, and such as pretend to astrology; for whilst they boast of knowing other men's fates, they are ignorant of their own: And if there be any truth in that science, one may say their ignorance in it affronts the stars, and often provokes them to hasten their own ruin. Assure thyself they only amuse the world with portentous stories to get fame and money.

Associate thyself with none but prudent and moderate men, whose morals are not leavened with a too furious zeal; who look not superciliously and with disdain on a Frank as he walks along the streets, much less offer him any indignity when he goes about his honest business, under the protection of the Grand Seignior. It becomes none but janizaries and ruffians to be guilty of these incivilities to strangers. The law of nations, and the particular commands of our holy prophet, oblige us to treat such with all humanity and tenderness; besides, it is reflecting on the justice and hospitality of the magnificent Porte, which is the refuge and sanctuary of all the earth, that a stranger cannot walk the streets in peace. Despise no man on the score of his religion, for there are no factions in paradise; but consider, that whilst thousands of mussulmans shall go to hell for their wicked

lives, so an equal number of those we call infidels may be received into the mansions of the blessed for their virtues.

Thou seemest to be much concerned for thy soul; thy letter abounds with overmuch care in this point. In being too solicitous, it is evident thy faith is small; every line is tinged with sad expressions about the perils, snares, ambushes, hooks, gins, and I know not what other devices the devil has to ruin thy poor soul, as thou callest it. Cousin, dost thou know what the soul is, about which thou keepest such a pudder? If thou dost, it is more than I do; and yet I have been searching and prying into it above these thirty years; I mean, from the time that I first began to think and consider of things; but am as far to seek as ever I was. Neither could all the wise men of old, the philosophers and sages, for aught I perceive, agree in their verdict about this mysterious thing which we call the soul.

One will have it to be only the finest part of matter in the body; another says it is the air which the lungs suck in, and diffuse through all our members; a third sort affirm it to be a mixture of air and fire; a fourth of earth and water; a fifth calls it a complexion made up of the four elements, a kind of quintessence, and I know not what. The Egyptians called it a certain moving number; and the Chaldeans, a power without form itself, yet imbibing all forms; Aristotle called it the perfection of a natural body. All these agreed that it was corporeal; and, as it were, extracted from matter. The best definition among them is not worth an asper.

But there were men of sublime speculations, who affirm the soul to be a divine substance, independent of the body. Of this opinion were Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plutarch, Porphyry, and



Plato. The last defined the soul to be a self-moving essence, endowed with understanding. But when they have said all, I prefer the modesty of Cicero, Seneca, and others, who acknowledged they were altogether ignorant what the soul is. There was no less disagreement among the philosophers about the seat of the soul. Hippocrates and Hierophilus placed it in the ventricles of the brain; Democritus assigned it the whole body; Strabo was of opinion it resides between the brows; Epicurus in the breast; the Stoics lodged it in the heart; and Empedocles in the blood; which last seems to be the most current opinion of the East to this day; in regard both Moses, the law-giver of the Jews, and Mahomet our holy prophet, asserted the same, and for that reason forbid flesh to be eaten with the blood.

But be it what it will, either corporeal or incorporeal, a substance, or an accident; whether it dwell in the head or in the feet, within or without the body, there is no certainty in these things, neither can we be assured what will become of it after death. Therefore, it is in vain to disquiet thyself in search of a mystery that is hid from mortals; and equally foolish it will be to frighten thyself with an imagination of hooks, gins, and such like chingras, which thou supposest the devil is busy with to intrap thy soul. It is a wonder thou art not afraid to sleep, lest he should catch thee napping, and steal thy soul from thee. I would fain know what sort of tools he must use to take hold of a substance more thin and imperceptible than a shadow, or how he will be able to seize and run away with a being active and free as thought.

Confin, serve God after the manner of thy forefathers, love thy friends, pardon thy enemies, be just to all men,

and do no injury to any beast: If thou observest this rule, thou mayst defy the devil, for thy soul is in safe custody. God is nearer to thee than thou art to thyself; he is in the centre of every thing, and is himself the centre of all things: In a word, he is all in all.

Paris, 3d of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1658.

VII.—*To AFIS, Bassa.*

Now the scenes are changed in Europe; enemies are become friends, and those who professed a mutual friendship are at open defiance. Constancy is a vice in politics, and a dexterous way of shifting from one engagement to another; for interest is esteemed the only state virtue.

I have already intimated to the divan the war which broke out last year between the Swedes and Danes: The latter began it by solemn proclamation, sending a herald at arms to the Swedish court, and dispatching ambassadors to all his allies in Christendom, to give them an account of his proceedings. Now I shall entertain thee with a short idea of this war, by which thou wilt comprehend, that the Danes are either much degenerated from the valour of their ancestors, who formerly made the most terrible figure of all the nations in the North; or else they are less obliged to fortune, who has not favoured them with so many successes and triumphs of late, but rather exposed them to the insults of their enemies, and the contempt of all men.

When the King of Denmark first proclaimed this war, he had a fair advantage of the Swedes, who at that time were sorely entangled between the Polanders, Germans, and Muscovites, and had more need of helps than his

drances; yet King Gustavus, turning part of his forces into Holstein, Schoneland, and Jutland, he took one part after another, till he had overcome those provinces in the space of six moons, and reduced the Danes to a necessity of composition, and that on such dishonourable terms, as renders them the scorn of their neighbouring nations.

On the 13th of the 3d moon, the two kings had an interview near Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark; for so far had the fortune of the Swedish arms carried their victories. They eat and drank together several times, and conversed privately some hours; at last a firm peace was concluded between them, and they concerted the measures of a perfect friendship.

But before this the Dane had been forced to yield up Schoneland, with Elsimberg, which commands half the Baltic sea: He surrendered also the provinces of Blakin and Halland, with a very strong castle; the island of Burtholme; ten ships of war, and obliged himself to pay a million of dollars, and to maintain four thousand horse and foot in the King of Swedeland's service, and give free quarter to all the Swedish forces till the 5th moon. These are such dishonourable articles, that the King of Denmark has quite lost himself in the esteem of all his allies: They call him a poor-spirited prince, not worthy of support or assistance,

In a word, serene bassia, it is like to fare with him as with other unfortunate men, who when they are once falling, every body will help to throw them down. Therefore conserve thy honour as the only bulwark of thy interest and life.

Paris, 3d of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1658.

VIII.—*To the MUFTI.*

By the faith of a true believer, I swear the Christians are enemies to themselves if they do not embrace the project of a certain jesuit ! They are no friends to their Messias if they reject so regular an idea, so reformed a model of the Nazarene empire, as this sage has lately proposed to the pope and the cardinals.

He lays his foundation very deep, and draws his examples from the practice of Peter, the prince of the first twelve Christian caliphs; whom the Franks call the apostles of Jesus, the son of Mary : For, according to their traditions, the Messias, before he ascended to Heaven, left an exact pattern of the empire he designed to establish on earth ; he divided this empire into twelve distinct provinces, according to the number of his apostles or vicars, assigning to each that quarter of the world where he was to preside, as Moses had formerly cantoned the holy region of Palestine among the twelve tribes that descended from Jacob.

But the happy son of Mary being a far greater prophet than Moses, or any that had gone before him, they say he would not be contented with diminutive territories or dominions disproportionate to his ineffable descent and original ; therefore he resolved on the conquest of the whole earth, commanding his vicegerents to disperse themselves through all nations, according to a certain method, and proclaim his laws to every creature on the globe.

Venerable president of the faithful, I relate these things as I receive them from the mouths and pens of learned Christians, who may be presumed to know their own history. Thou wilt perhaps expect to hear of armies immediately raised, of camps, battles, and sieges, of

devastations by fire and sword, storming of cities, and famishing of the more impregnable fortresses; in a word, I believe thou lookest for a relation of campaigns and victories, more glorious than the achievements of the Roman Casars, more fortunate than the successes of Alexander the Great; but I tell thee all the registers and archives of the primitive Christians cannot furnish us with any memoirs of this nature.

Their gospel mentions no warlike undertakings, not so much as the drawing of the sword by the son of Mary, or any of his followers, unless in a private rencounter, when Peter, the lieutenant of the Messias, inflamed with a passion to see his master betrayed by Judas his kahyah, or testerdar, and rudely assaulted by Malchus, a slave of the Jewish mufti, the valiant apostle drew his scimetar, and cut off the fellow's ear.

Believe me, O mysterious doctor of the mussulmans, I have perused the four histories of the life of Jesus, written by those who were eye-witnesses of his actions; and I find indeed that he once said to them of his retinue, "I come not to send peace on earth, but a sword:" Yet by the sequel it is evident, that when he examined what weapons his followers had, and they told him "but two swords," he seemed to be well satisfied, saying, "It is enough;" though a moment before he bid him among them that had no sword sell his robe and buy one.

And I have seen a dispatch sent by Paul, one of the primitive Christian caliphs, to the Nazarenes at Ephesus, wherein he counsels them to put on complete armour, as helmet, breastplate, shield, buffin, sword, and the rest.

Besides these passages, or such like, there is no military discourse throughout the book of the gospel, much less any relation of battles, sieges, or any martial ex-

plots; and the Christian mollahs, or doctors, interpret that letter of Paul's in a mystical sense.

Wilt thou know then how the Messias and his apostles subdued the world? I will tell thee it was by exemplary virtue and good works, by miracles, and evident demonstrations of a supernatural power assisting them; for they spake all languages, yet were most of them illiterate persons; they cured the deaf, the blind, the lame, and the paralytic, without the methods of surgery or physic; they cast out devils, raised the dead, and, finally, performed such and so many stupendous actions, that the world became captivated to their doctrines and laws, and willingly submitted to a yoke which seemed to come from Heaven. With divine eloquence, and the dint of irresistible reason, Peter, the prince of the Christian caliphs, subdued the minds of his astonished auditory one day in Jerusalem, so that before the sun went down, he gained five thousand profelytes. The fame of these things was soon spread through the adjacent countries, and divers remote provinces, and the number of the converts was proportionably increased. In a word, all that embraced the faith of Jesus surrendered both themselves and their estates to be entirely disposed of at the pleasure of the apostles; so great and unreserved an attach had they for the vicars of their God.

Now the forenamed jesuit considering these things, and comparing the state of those devout times with the libertinism, divisions, wars, and general contempt of the priesthood among the Christians of succeeding times, and especially in this present age, attributes the source of all these evils to the ill conduct of the apostles themselves, and their successors in the primitive times, who did not sufficiently improve the advantages they were possessed of, when the pious multitude would willingly have made

them lords of all things ; for, says he, by the same methods and reasons might they have claimed the dominion over the estates of kings and emperors themselves, as over the goods and lands of the meanest proselyte, since they were all equally sons of the church, and subject to the discipline and laws of Jesus.

This ecclesiastic politician therefore mightily blames Pope Sylvester, who sat in the chair of Peter, when Constantine the Great became a Christian, being the first of the Roman emperors who embraced that faith. He accuses him, I say, of weakness and a mean spirit, for accepting of that donation, which to this day is called the patrimony of the church, and comprehends all the temporal estates the Roman pontiffs can boast of ; whereas he ought to have claimed an entire resignation of the whole Roman empire into his hands, as supreme vicar of God on earth. This would have been a pattern, says he, to all the kings and princes of the earth who thought fit to turn Christians ; and so the dominions of the world had all fallen to the share of the priests.

Neither could it appear difficult, in his opinion, to have reduced the greatest monarchs to such a forgetfulness and contempt of their royal birth, and all the potent charms of a crown, since the same rhetoric which persuaded them to be followers of the Messias, would have also convinced them of the vanity of all earthly enjoyments, and of the obligation they had to be mortified, and to pursue their claims to diadems of a more exalted degree, the ineffable regalia of paradise.

But since things are thus in their present state, and the Christian princes retain their sovereignty, without any other dependence on the pope, saving in matters purely religious, this jesuit proposes, that the Roman pontiffs would either first reform their own lives and court to the height

of that primitive and apostolical purity which shines so eminently in the earliest governors of the church, and by that means persuade all the monarchs in Christendom to become their subjects; or else compel them by force to take the order of priesthood, and so turn their crowns into mitres, their kingdoms into ecclesiastic commonwealths, where all the public offices of state, seats of judicature, and, in fine, the whole system of the civil and political administration, should be managed by the priests in a subordinate dependence one of another, according as their several characters required; by which means all Christendom would soon be united into one ecclesiastic empire, whereof the pope should be the supreme head in temporals as well as spirituals.

What I have related is not only this man's private project, but the universal aim of his whole order; and thousands of other priests and dervises are caballing in all the courts and countries of Europe to bring it to pass.

Venerable Esad, if God should suffer their contrivance to take effect, it is to be feared our wars with the Christians would be as expensive and troublesome, if not more fatal to the muslinman interest, than when these infidels formerly, laying aside their private feuds, banded together to conquer the Holy Land.

Paris, 25th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1658.

IX.—*To ABDEL MELEC MULI OMAR, President of the College of Sciences at Fez.*

I RECEIVED the packet of venerable import, containing sacred counsels, and acceptable intelligence, replenished with noble memoirs, and illustrious remarks, sage, pre-



cepts, and refined improvements in philosophy and the mysterious sciences of nature.

With abundance of affection and joy I read the character of Mufu Abu'l Yahyan, and the encomium of his wisdom and virtues. May a constellation of such lights always adorn that renowned college, and from thence disperse their learned influence and rays, not only through Africa, but over all the earth; that Fez may be numbered among the cities whose fame is sweet, that it may be ranked with Jerusalem the holy, Masre the ancient, Medina Tainabi the chaste, and the salutiferous Babylon; acquiring a peculiar title of honour, an attribute worthy of respect, when men shall every where call it Fez, the mother of sciences.

My soul has been very inquisitive and restless for many years, and I think this is owing to my captivity in Palermo; for, before that, whilst I lived at ease in the seraglio, basking under the warmer influence of royal majesty, the sacred presence of the Grand Seignior, who like the sun, gives motion, heat, and life to all things, I never regarded books, or once applied my mind to study any thing but how to acquit myself in my station, and strengthen my interest at the court; esteeming all other learning as barbarous which conducted not to this end.

Foreign histories and languages were equally contemptible to me: I thought it beneath a mussulman courtier to give his tongue and mind the fatigue of any other dialect save the Persian, Arabic, and Turkish; or to load his memory with the records of other nations designed to be the slaves of true believers.

As to the speculative sciences, I was naturally desirous enough of knowledge; but I either had not leisure, or wanted books and other advantages of study; so that all the knowledge I could then boast of consisted only in

some loose notions of logic and metaphysics, which I had got by reading an old Arabic manuscript: And I thought myself historian enough, after I had perused the annals of the Ottoman empire, and now and then cast an eye on the Turkish translation of Herodotus and Plutarch.

It is true, indeed, by conversing frequently with the Greeks, I soon learned their vulgar dialect; but this is far from the polite language of the ancient Grecians; and a page of the treasury taught me the rudiments of Slavonian; which afterwards I learned more perfectly, hoping it would be of some service to me one time or other.

All these were very superficial accomplishments, yet I thought myself happy enough without searching any farther. The pleasures and quietness of a country life took from me the edge and gust with which I have since pursued more solid studies, and looked into the wisdom of the ancients.

But when once misfortune had changed the scene of my life, and, instead of the honourable post I had in the Grand Signior's service, fate had rendered me a miserable subject slave in Sicily, I began to grow very thoughtful and pensive; the continual drudgery and labour I underwent, soon mortified my former passions, and weaned me from all hopes of worldly honour; and the cruel stripes I daily received from that barbarous insidel my master, so broke my spirits, that servitude became familiar to me, and despairing to be happy in this world, I was only ambitious to be wise.

I grew very contemplative; and having acquainted myself with an honest carpenter in the town where we lived, who had a great many books in his custody, he lent me several choice treatise, and I borrowed all the hours I

could from sleep to peruse them with attention and profit. That carpenter pitied my condition, and did me many good offices of friendship, without other hopes of reward save what he expected from God. By his means I contracted a familiarity with two or three learned men; who spared no pains to instruct me in the Roman and ancient Greek languages, as also in the principles of philosophy. My master often beat me for this, attributing the neglect of his business to my bookishness (as he called it), and keeping the priests company; but all his severity could not abate my ardent thirst after knowledge; I still continued studying at certain seasons until the happy hour of my redemption, and then I frequented the academies; ever since which time I have neglected no opportunities of improving my reason, yet find myself at this day much in the dark. There appears no certainty in any science but the mathematics; all the rest are entangled with a thousand controversies and riddles, which has made me turn sceptic in most things; only I retain an inviolable faith for the Alcoran, and the book of prophetic doctrines and traditions; next to these I pay a profound respect to the writings of Porphyry the philosopher, who seems to approach nearest to reason of all the ancient sages. His true name was the same as thine (Melech), which thou knowest in the Syriac signifies King; whence his tutor Longinus, taking occasion from the usual colour of royal robes, called him Porphyrius, which in the Greek signifies one clad in purple. He was born at Tyre, the metropolis of the ancient Phoenicians; his pedigree was noble, and his education generous: Nature had also formed him for a sage, and fortune favoured him with advantages enough; for, besides his first tutor, whom I have already mentioned, who was the greatest grammarian and orator of his time, Por-

phyry went to Rome, where he gained the friendship of Plotinus, and that philosopher accomplished him in the perfection of all science; so that he had power over the demons, and expelled the genius Atan which infested certain baths in Rome. In a word, his doctrines appeared divine, and his actions more than human; yet he himself, before his death, published a reverse of his former writings, which is a sufficient argument that there is no stability in the thoughts of mortals.

Therefore, since the wisest of men contradict themselves, and turn sceptics, tell me, O oracle of the age, why may not I?

Paris, 13th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1658.

X.—*To MURAT, Bassa.*

THERE has been something lately transacted between the French and the English which seems a mystery. Nobody here understands the meaning of it, but the very privados of the cabinet; yet every one guesses it is a fetch of Mazarini's wit. That minister has more meanders in his brains than an old Turkish gamester at chefs, who foresees no less than nine unavoidable consequences before he makes one bold motion; and to be sure the last shall be to his own advantage. In a word, Dunkirk, the strongest and most important sea-town of all the West, is surrendered by the Spaniards to the French, and by these, as an earnest of friendship, is put into the hands of the English.

The little politicians of the city are amazed at it, and the greatest Machiavels of the court either cannot or will not inform them of the true secret.

You shall see two or three grave citizens brooding

thoughts together over a box of powder, and sneezing out their sentiments without reserve; yet after all their wise consult, they part as great fools as they met, and only satisfy themselves with nodding wisdom to each other at their last conge, wherein is comprehended the whole system of the politics.

It was generally thought to be some extraordinary overture this court would make to the English, when a little before the surrender of Dunkirk, the Duke of Crequi, first gentleman of the bed-chamber, and Monsieur Mancini, the cardinal's nephew, were sent with a splendid retinue of French nobles to England. Every body guessed some surprizing action would follow, and that it must needs be a mystery of grand importance which could not be trusted to persons of less note than the two chief favourites of the cardinal minister; and now it is come out, they know not what to make of it; neither can I possibly learn as yet the true reason of putting the English in possession of such a town as this, which commands all the northern seas, and has cost so much sweat and blood to take from the Spaniards. I have set Osman the dwarf to work, and laid traps to get the secret from several other courtiers; but I might as well have attempted to find out the body of Moses, which caused a quarrel between Michael and the devil. Time perhaps will discover the secret; and I dare at present conclude, that the English are the only nation in Europe whose friendship the French think worth courting.

The king has been very ill of a fever, and in great danger of his life, but is now recovered again, which occasions abundance of real joy among his friends and loyal subjects; as for the rest, they know how to counterfeit.

I had almost forgot to tell thee, that the Spaniards, endeavouring to relieve Dunkirk, were encountered by

the French and routed, about two thousand of their men being killed, and as many taken prisoners.

Sage bassa, the successes of this monarch are so constant, that they have given birth to a proverb; for when they would encourage any man's hopes, or make a strong asseveration, they usually say, "As sure as the Great Lewis will get a town or two in Flanders this campaign."

Marschal Turenne is a brave general, and the French victories are in a great measure owing to his conduct. He is very expeditious in his undertakings. There were but a few days between the surrender of Dunkirk, and his taking of Bergen, Furnes, and Dixmude, three strong fortresses in Flanders; and it is thought it will not be long before he takes others.

The French king is in a fair way to the empire of the West: But this will not be for the interest of the Grand Seignior; for then he will have a new enemy of an old friend, and one more potent than he had before. Yet destiny over-rules all things.

Paris, 13th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1658.

XI.—To MOHAMMED *the Eremite of Mount Uriel in Arabia.*

I HAVE often troubled thee with important addresses, O matchless mortal! Permit me once more to unbosom my thoughts, as to my confessor, or rather as to an oracle.

Surely this hour the stars of my nativity suffer a mighty change; I seem to myself like one newly awaked out of a deep sleep, or from the delusions of a long dream; for so methinks have my past years gone away like a

night, wherein my labouring spirit has encountered with nothing but phantasms, visions, and darkness.

My infant days I esteem the most happy, when my ignorance of vice had greater influence on my actions, and preserved me more free from blemish, than could afterwards all my acquired knowledge of the precepts and maxims of virtue; for no sooner was I enjoying the study of morality, and taught to distinguish between good and evil, but my curiosity prompted me to examine the nature of the latter more closely than by bare speculation. I found myself more forcibly carried away by a secret pleasure, to make experiment of what was forbidden, than to practise what was commanded; so prone is man to be jealous of his tutors, and to suspect those laws as impositions which put a restraint on his native liberty.

Besides this, there are certain genial inclinations in every mortal, which the youngest, and he that is in his nonage, thinks he has as much right to gratify as the wisest senior; nor can any reason easily persuade him to part with this privilege, but under the notion of being highly wronged, since every man naturally places his interest and happiness in pursuing the motions of his own will.

It is true I never was prone to any enormous vices, or such as for their singularity would make the most hardened libertine blush, did he practise them to the knowledge of men.

I ever had an unconquerable abhorrence for those specific acts of lasciviousness which ought not to be named, and whose very idea makes the thought recoil; yet am naturally amorous, and cannot but pay to beauty the sentiments and passions which are due from Platonic love. I admire symmetry and elegance wherever I discern them; and can stand gazing whole hours together on a flower,

a tree, or a peacock : I am enamoured with the brightness of the sun ; and, like another Endymion, I languish for a more intimate acquaintance with the moon. The lesser beauties of the night, the stars, inflame me with a thousand passions ; I make my court to the whole host of Heaven, yet I hope commit no idolatry. In fine, I am in love with the universe, and die hourly, when I contemplate the glory of the transcendent Essence which is the root and source of all things.

These are passions not unbecoming a Mussulman : But I have also some emotions for beautiful women ; more violent than all the rest, more dangerous and fatal. Tell me, O pious Sylvan, how I shall gratify my love without offending virtue, or the gravity of a man.

These creatures seem to be created for our perplexity, since a man can neither well be happy with or without them : They are perfect riddles ; and to love them or hate them too much is an equal solecism. It were a question worthy of a philosopher, whether this sex, among all the necessary good offices they do us, were not sent into the world as spies and trepanners, to observe our councils and actions, and, by mixing smiles with frowns, flatteries with reproaches, fullness with more obliging favours, to keep us in a perpetual maze and labyrinth, lest the aspiring wit of men should, if left to themselves, attempt something more audacious than the poets feign of the sons of Titan, or the written law records of Nimrod and his companions, who built the Tower of Babel.

But whether they be spies, or faithful assistants, enemies or friends, I tell thee plainly, I have not been able to forbear loving them excessively ; and this is part of the dream or trance out of which I am just now awaked.

Another scene is that of honour. This is a phantom also ; a mere vapour, a shadow. I never hunted after



glory, nor courted popular applause; yet being entrusted with the sublime secrets, and commanded to serve the Grand Seignior in this station, I would fain acquit myself without disgrace; nay, like other mortals in such post, I would willingly have the smiles of my sovereign, and the caresses of the happy ministers who serve him, if it shall be my lot ever to return to the seraglio. Nothing appears to me more terrible than at such a time to encounter with rugged, furrowed visages, or cold and faint embraces of my fellow-slaves.

This puts me upon a thousand inquietudes, makes me swear to contradictions, utter lies and blasphemies which would turn the devil to a saint for fear; in a word, I stumble at no vice or immorality which may promote the cause I am engaged in, and all this for the sake of a fair character at the Porte, whilst I am cajoling myself, as well as others, with a persuasion that it is only on the score of honesty, and to acquit myself a good man. Thus I pursue a blast, a bubble, the idea of nothing, mere vanity, and an empty dream; and it is harder for me to shake off this enchantment than that of love.

Yet all this while I have not taken the French method to gain honour; I never was guilty of oppression and cruelty, nor bathed my hands in human blood; no widow or orphan mourns for what I have taken from them, nor did I ever dragoon any body into compliance with reason. All the parts I have acted in this nature were defensive, pure efforts of self-preservation, which thou knowest is a principle natural to all men, and even to the worms of the earth: These little reptiles, when they are trampled on, will turn again; and nothing more do I, unless in the Sultan's cause.

This puts me in mind of my integrity; for I must tell thee my virtues as well as my vices. Neither Atabia,

nor all the East, have ever brought forth a man more true to his trust, than honest, loyal Mahmut ; I will for ever boast of this in an age so full of treachery ; this alone will carry me safe to paradise, in spite of all the mollahs. As for the rest they are only venial sins, easily dropped off on the bridge of trial ; and, so long as nobody can say I have betrayed my master's secrets, I am safe as an angel that is not obliged to stand centinel at the lowest post of Heaven ; for there he is within gun-shot of the devil.

Just as I drew my pen from that word, a sudden noise in the streets called me to the window, where, turning my eyes from the earth to the moon and stars, (for it was a very serene sky) I observed a small swift cloud to glide along from south to north, much in appearance like a bale of silk : It cleft the element like a sly Arab thief that swims for booty on the river Tygris. Wondering at this, when all the firmament was clear, and not another cloud above the horizon, I soon concluded it was the chariot of some airy god, a Mercury, or messenger sent with speedy news to the high lords, commanders of the arctic regions, to bid them be upon their guard, or some such weighty matter. Perhaps, thought I, a war is commenced between the spirits of the poles ; or it may be King Æolus has sent a summons to the northern winds, being resolved to play some royal pneumatic freaks upon the sea.

In good earnest, it made me reflect on our ignorance of the laws and constitutions of the elements : It put me in mind of the fogs and mists which sometimes envelop the globe in darkness, on purpose, for aught we know, to hinder us from seeing what is transacting at such seasons in the higher regions of the air. The spirits of those serener tracks may then be frolicing in visible forms,

celebrating solemn festivals, and kindling all the meteors of the upper welkin, as natural fire-works and illuminations, not fit for mortals to behold, lest we should learn too much, and grow as wise as they. However, it made me very contemplative to see a single solitary cloud thus glide along the air; and I could have wished for wings to pursue its motions, because the appearance was not common.

Thou that hast measured the whole frame of nature, and taken the true dimensions of the world, that hast penetrated into the secrets of the elements, and art always busied in the most sage and solid scrutinies, wilt smile at the vanity of common mortals, such as I, who, when we are intelligible to ourselves, yet presume to comprehend the ways of the Omnipotent, who is perfect in knowledge.

As for me, who have studied in the academies, and read Aristotle, Avicen, Plotinus, Averroes, with other Philosophers, I esteem myself still but at the bottom of Plato's cave, conversing with shadows, mistaken in every thing but the idea of thy sanctity and immense wisdom, which is imprinted on my soul, as those which the philosophers call first principles, because they are self-evident.

I designed to have said more to thee, but a sudden indisposition and extreme faintness has taken away my spirits; my limbs tremble, my head is giddy, my heart fails me; in a word, I seem like one between a mortal and a ghost.

Paris, 29th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1658.

XII.—To ACHMET PADISHANI, CULLIGIZ, *Bassa*.

THY surname argues thee a favourite at the seraglio; and for that reason I know thou art accustomed to receive infinite submissions and flatteries; but I must be as blunt with thee as I was with the new musti, when I congratulated his accession to the chief patriarchate. I told that prince of the mussulman prelates, that I had no encouragement to welcome him to a dignity, which, though in itself sacred and inviolable, yet could not secure him from the persecutions of popular envy, any more than it did his predecessor; and the same I must say to thee.

Darnish Mehemet, *bassa*, is fallen a victim to the rage of the multitude; and thou hast got his seat on the bench. Mayst thou enjoy it long, and never be mobbed out of thy honour and life as he was. Some years ago he forbade me to write any more to him; what his reason was I know not, neither did I ever inquire. However I obeyed his injunction, being indifferent to whom I send my intelligence, provided I do the Grand Signior any service; for to that end am I placed here.

Illustrious *bassa*, I shall now acquaint thee with two the most principal points of news stirring in Europe: One is the election of Leopoldus Ignatius Josephus, King of Hungary and Bohemia, to the German empire: They have been canvassing this business eleven moons; and at last the Austrian faction carried it: This was done on the 8th of the 7th moon; and he was solemnly crowned on the 22d of the same. This has heightened the quarrel between the Duke of Bavaria and the Prince Palatine: The latter was so far transported with passion at the diet of Frankfort, that he threw a standish of ink at the Bavarian ambassador, which is resented as an un-

pardonable affront; and the duke is marching with an army to revenge it, or demand satisfaction. The Elector of Mentz has denied him a passage through his principality, and they are all like to be embroiled in a civil war about it. This is no bad news for the muslimans.

But that which makes yet a greater noise is the death of Oliver, the protector of the English commonwealth, who, whilst living, was the terror of all Europe. The superstitious, and such as regard signs, say, this was prefiged three moons ago, when a great whale, nine times as long as a tall man, was taken in a river of England, near the capital city, forty miles from the sea. I know not whether these kind of observations are worthy of credit; yet it seems the annals of that nation take notice, that the unusual appearance of a whale so far within land has always prognosticated some mighty change. Perhaps the fate of illustrious personages affects nature with a more than ordinary passion, puts the elements into a disorder, and inspires the brutes with sympathy.

We are assured, that on the day of this prince's death, and at the very hour of his departure, there was so violent a tempest of wind, rain, hail, thunder and lightning, as had never been known by any man then alive in that nation; which some interpreted to his dishonour, as if he were a magician, or at least a very wicked man, and that this hurricane was raised by the devils, who transported his soul to hell; whilst others affirmed this mixed storm to be only the sighs and tears of nature, the mournful passions of the guardian spirits of England, for the loss of so great and fortunate a hero, and that the very inanimate beings condoled his death. As for me, I look on all these things as pure accidents, the effects of chance. I have an equal opinion of another circumstance, much observed both by his enemies and friends, that he

died on the same day whereon he had formerly gained some notable victories ; the one descanting on this to his reproach, the other drawing from it arguments of honour. It is difficult to say any thing of him without appearing partial ; he had great virtues, and no less vices ; he was a valiant general, and wise statesman ; yet a traitor to his sovereign. As for religion, though he professed himself a zealot, yet it is thought he was as indifferent as other princes, who for reasons of state, and to please their people, make a show of piety, but in their hearts adore no other god but fortune and victory.

He was esteemed one of the greatest politicians of this age, and none could match him but Mazarini ; yet I cannot but smile when I call to mind how both these eminent statesmen were cheated this year by two or three fugitives.

A certain French captain, named Gentilot, that had served under the States of Holland in the wars, and on that account had often passed through the sea towns in Flanders, observed a weakness in one part of the walls of Ostend, by which the town might easily be surpris'd : At his return to Paris, he acquainted Cardinal Mazarini with this, and gave him so great encouragement, that the cardinal resolv'd to try some stratagem, in order to gain that important place, without the cost and hazards of a formal siege.

To this end, he commands Gentilot to seek out some persons fit to be engaged in the plot, men of resolution, conduct, and secrecy. This captain therefore knowing two or three fugitives in Paris, who were forced to fly out of Flanders to save their lives, having committed murders and other crimes against the Spanish government, breaks the business to them, promising mountains of gold if they would assist in carrying it on.

They seemed to embrace his proposals with abundance of readiness, and were introduced into the cardinal's cabinet, where that minister being satisfied in their characters, and the offers they made to serve him in this affair, seconded the promises which Gentilot had made them, with many additional encouragements. In a word, they consulted together frequently, were late every night in the cardinal's lodgings, and at last having adjusted all the necessary measures that were to be taken, the fugitives were dispatched away into England with letters from Mazarini to Oliver the English protector, wherein he acquainted him with the design, requiring the assistance of some English ships to transport men into the haven of Ostend.

These agents went accordingly, but with a resolution to put a trick both on the cardinal and the protector; and, by doing their country so considerable a service as the saving this town, to merit a repeal of the sentence pronounced against them, that so they might return home in peace, and enjoy their estates and native liberty.

Oliver received them very kindly, and embraced the motion with some warmth; but upon second thoughts tried to out-bribe Mazarini, and hire these persons for himself. Ostend was too sweet a bait in his eye to let it so tamely fall into the hands of the French, for want of a few larger promises, and offers of gold; wherefore he plied these agents briskly with all the effectual oratory he could, to win them over to his own separate interest, engaging to bestow great preferments on them in England, with two hundred thousand sequins, as soon as the business was accomplished.

The three Flemings desired no better sport than thus to cajole two the ablest statesmen in Europe. They possessed Oliver with an entire belief of their zeal and fidelity

in his service, and it was agreed on between them to hold Mazarini in play, and that Oliver should send him an answer, refusing to meddle in an intrigue which seemed to carry so little probability of success.

From England these agents passed over into Zealand, it having been so concluded before they parted from Cardinal Mazarini, that so they might there gain more confederates, and lay all the necessary trains to bring this intrigue to the desired issue; but instead of doing either the protector or Cardinal Mazarini this service, they went immediately, and revealed the whole secret to the governor of Flanders.

He having duly examined all circumstances, and being satisfied in the truth of their relations, and in their loyalty to the King of Spain, commanded them to proceed in deluding both the French and the English as long as they could, with fair hopes of accomplishing their aims; whilst he took care to secure Ostend, and other parts of Flanders, from all attempts of this nature.

In fine, the protector falling off again, being frightened by Cardinal Mazarini's threats, who had discovered his underhand dealing, these agents applied themselves close to the French, who were now made so much more eager by Oliver's design to interlope them. They spun out the intrigue several moons, brought the French king to sign articles, and to pass his word for the payment of near a million of gold; cajoled his general in Flanders, and at one time made him believe it was his interest to lie still for six weeks together, when all the world expected he would pursue his conquests in that province; at another time, caused him to march with so much precipitation, when the ways were impassable, that he was forced to leave most of his cannon, and a thousand waggons



plunged in the deep roads, with the loss of three thousand men, who were either drowned or starved; and all this for the sake of gaining Ostend; when after all they were not only cheated of their hopes in that point, but most shamefully exposed to the derision and contempt of all Europe; for Cardinal Mazatini reposed an entire confidence in the fidelity of his Flemish agents; so that whatsoever they proposed as an expedient to compass the design was a law. Hence it was, that the French general in Flanders received express orders to embark part of his army in certain vessels that lay before Dunkirk, and, on a prefixed day, to sail into the haven of Ostend, there to land his men, and take possession of the town, in the name of his master; being made to believe that the gates would be opened to him, and that the Spanish garrison should march out in his sight.

All this was carried on with so much artifice and subtle management, that when he entered the haven with ten vessels, he thought himself secure of the place; yet no sooner landed his men, to the number of fifteen hundred, but they thundered upon them such volleys of great and small shot from the walls, that two hundred of them fell immediately, as many threw down their arms, and the citizens making a vigorous sally, the rest were either killed or taken prisoners, he himself not escaping that misfortune.

By this thou mayest discern how easy it is for an agent of any prince to embarrass his master's affairs, and that a public minister can never commit a greater or more dangerous error than in being too credulous.

Serene baskā, let not Mahmut's name sound harsh at the Porte, nor his honour be traduced by sycophants, since his loyalty is proof against all temptations; and this

the ministers of the divan know by twenty years experience.

Paris, 5th of the 10th Moon, of the Year 1658.

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XIII.—*To PESTELI HALI, his Brother, Master of the Grand Seignior's Customs at Constantinople.*

I HAVE received a dispatch from our cousin Ifouf: He has been in a cold region, within the arctic circle, but now is at Stockholm in Sweden. The parts he has visited are the farthestmost tracks of our continent to the north; they may be called the territories of night and darkness, for they have but one day in a whole year. The sun appears but once above their horizon, during his annual progress through the zodiac; yet he makes them amends by the long continued light he affords them at that season; for that one day is, without the miracle of Joshua, prolonged the space of four, five, or six moons, according to the proportionate distance of each country from the pole.

Ifouf relates strange things of those dark countries, and such as seem almost to surpass credit, were they not confirmed by many grave and learned writers: He says that in some parts of Norway no tree is to be seen, by reason of the violent force of the winds, which blow down all before them, carrying away even the roofs of houses, and scattering them at a great distance, so that the inhabitants are forced to dwell in dens and caves, and burn the bones of fishes for want of better fuel, since it is impossible for any plant to grow in those parts. Neither can men travel safely on horses, or a-foot, at certain tempestuous seasons, for the wind will either throw both horse and man to the ground, or catch them up into the air.

But when he describes the horrible coldness of these

regions, the very idea of it is enough to make one quake. He says cold is an active quality, and reigns under the north pole as in its proper kingdom or centre, from whence it darts its freezing rays through the earth: Yet others are of opinion, that cold is only a privation of heat, a bare passive disposition of the elements, and therefore more sensibly felt in those climates that are farthest from the warm influence of the sun, whose beams give life and vigour to all things. Be it how it will, its effects are very remarkable in these northern regions.

All the rivers, lakes, and seas there, are frozen up during the winter; men, horses, waggons, coaches, and even whole armies, pass as commonly over the ice, as before ships sailed there, or as we travel over the firm land; and last winter the Baltic sea was the road of ice over which the King of Sweden marched with his army of horse and foot into Zealand, to prosecute the war in those parts. They also raise strong forts of snow, able to sustain the battery of bullets and engines of war with all the violence of the fiercest assaults. They build caravanseras on the frozen seas and lakes for the convenience of travellers, and set up branches of fir or juniper, as marks to distinguish the holes and fissures of the ice from that which is solid and secure, for there are highways on those congealed waters; and officers appointed to survey them, and take all necessary orders for the security of travellers; and sometimes they fight pitched battles on the frozen element.

Our kinsman also has made curious remarks on the triumphal obelisks, and funeral monuments of ancient heroes among the Goths and Swedes; for those nations boast of giants and famous warriors. These monuments, though of stone, and exquisitely shaped, yet were never cut by the hand of man, but are so many splinters of rocks and

mountains, torn from the main body by the violence of earthquakes, thunders, or the like motions of nature; and, falling down in the forms of pyramids, and other artificial figures, were of old set up by the graves of giants and other renowned persons; having also inscriptions on them, signifying the particular hero who there lies buried: Such as these:

IUFFO, fighting in defence of my country, with my own hand killed thirty-two giants; and at last being killed by the giant Robo, my body lies here.

And;

INGOLVAS, that subdued all oppressors, and defended the poor and weak, now grown old, poor, and weak myself, yet having my sword girt to my thigh, am forced to yield to death, who conquers all things, and to go down into this sepulchre, which I prepared for my last retreat.

It seems there are infinite numbers of these tombs all over the deserts, mountains, and valleys of the North, which is an argument that however contemptible these people may seem to the true believers, yet they have not been wanting in valiant men and heroes. Doubtless God has dispensed his virtues and graces to men of all nations; he is not partial in his gifts; we ought to praise him in the beginning and end of all our actions; and if we contemplate his honour in the middle of our affairs, we shall not do amiss, since, as he is the first and the last of the universe, so he is the centre of every thing.

I had not these relations only from Isouf, but out of the historians themselves, who write of these countries; yet our kinsman informs me of some things which are omitted by those authors. Every traveller is singular in his observations; for all men have not the same genius;

and thy journal of the East abounds with remarks which are not common in other writers.

Brother, if I may advise thee, it shall be to do nothing by imitation, but pursue the dictates of thy own sense, and the peculiar bent of thy soul; for whatever is forced and affected is nauseous.

Paris, 16th of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1658.

XIV.—To ZEIDI ALAMANZI, a Merchant in Venice.

THE kaimacham has informed me that thou art appointed to succeed Adonai the Jew in Italy: He has also acquainted me with other matters relating to thy charge. I am glad they have found out a mussulman capable of that important trust, and that we shall not always stand in need of Jews to serve the Grand Seignior, emperor of the faithful. Though some of that nation are very honest and loyal, yet it is better to be without them.

Thou and I are strangers to each other; but it is necessary for us to be speedily acquainted, and hold a mutual intimacy by letters, that so we may serve our great master without interfering or clashing in our intelligence. I have been here these twenty years, and made no false steps in my sovereign's business, whatever I have done in my own; yet have encountered a thousand difficulties and perils, suffered imprisonment many moons in Paris for my fidelity, whilst my enemies at Constantinople persecuted me as a traitor and an infidel.

It is impossible to avoid these crosses in the course of human life; they are natural as the wind or the rain: All that we can do is, by a prudent and dexterous management of contingencies, to wind ourselves out of trouble as well as we can; and above all, rather to be our own

executioners, than betray the least secret committed to us.

I question not but thou hast had the same instructions given thee by the ministers of the happy Porte: What I say, is only to confirm thee in thy fidelity and care. Write to me with the same frankness, and let nothing make thee reserved to thy fellow-slave. We are both followers of the prophet; we worship one God after the same manner, and equally reverence the Alcoran; we serve one master, and though in different stations, yet let our affections and interests be united as friends; let no little narrow passions or emulations corrupt our integrity, nor teach us to unman ourselves.

I know not thy original, whether thou art of Mahometan or Christian parents. It would be very obliging to send me a short history of thy life, and how thou learnedst the Italian tongue; for without that, I judge they would not have sent thee into that country.

As for me, I am an Arabian by birth, brought up in the seraglio, from thence sent to sea, there taken captive by the Christians, sold in Sicily, where I underwent a tedious servitude, yet at length gained my freedom; and having passed through various fortunes, at last was sent hither, to observe the secret counsels of the Christians, especially of this court.

I now grow old, having seen near fifty years; yet, though the strength of my body fails, I feel not the least decay in my zeal for the mussulman faith, or my master's service. I am still Mahmut the loyal slave of the Porte, and thy friend; so long as thou art so thyself

Paris, 30th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1659.

XV.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

IT rejoices me to hear that Adonai's place is supplied by by a mussulman, in whom the sublime Porte may put more confidence than in any of the Jewish race: It will be encouragement to the true faithful, and a precedent of good import; for no nation loves to see their prince bestow offices of trust on strangers, when his own people are as capable of employment as they; it is generally taken as an affront, and contempt of their abilities or their virtue, and has often produced ill consequences.

I deny not but there are many honest and wise men among the Hebrews, persons of merit and honour, from whom the sultan receives no small services, but this ought not to diminish the reputation of those who are of the same faith with their sovereign. Doubtless Arabia and Turkey are not barren of good soldiers, prudent statesmen, and dexterous ministers.

I know not the character of Zeidi Alamanzi, whether he be a natural born Turk, a tributary son of a Christian, or a voluntary renegado; however, the choice that is made of him convinces me that the unerring divan esteems him a man fit for the business committed to his charge.

He ought to be perfectly skilled in Italian, or at least in some other language of the Nazarenes, that so he may pass the better unsuspected among the people where he resides, who are more jealous of strangers than any other nation in Europe. It is a crime thought worthy of imprisonment for a Venetian to converse with a foreigner too frequently, and in private; for they are afraid lest by that means a dangerous correspondence should be established betwixt some ill affected subjects of that commonwealth.

and its enemies; whereby their secrets may be betrayed, and measures taken to ruin them.

For this reason also they have forbid false hair, or perukes, to be worn by any in their dominions, lest this might serve as a disguise for villains and traitors; yet nothing is more common in France, and other countries of Europe, than for men to wear on their heads ornaments of womens hair, instead of their own.

As to religion, I believe they will not much trouble him, being no zealots themselves; and provided he does but profess himself a Christian and Catholic, they will make no farther inquisition.

The Italians in general are much like the ancient Romans in their humour; men of grave aspect and carriage, and much more composed in both than the French, who appear ridiculous through the levity of their discourse and actions. The former abound in sage precepts of morality, and politic aphorisms, which serve as a rule whereby to square the course of their lives; the latter only affect some flashy improvements of wit and conversation, studying rather how to please women than men; coveting to be perfect in external accomplishments, and the graces of the body, whilst they slight the more valuable endowments of the mind. In a word, they are mere apes and mimics. On the contrary, the Italians are men of an awful and majestic behaviour, solid judgment, and deep reach. If you see them smile, you shall seldom or never hear them laugh; whereas the motion of a feather will set the French a-braying like asses. These will contract a warm friendship with any man at first interview, heighten it with a thousand compliments, make him their confessor, and unobscure all their secrets; yet a second encounter shall extinguish this passion, and a third shall revive it again; whereas those are cautious and slow in the choice



of their friends, and when once that knot is dissolved, it is never to be fastened there again; they are irreconcilable in their hatred and revenge.

But there are men to be excepted in both nations, who fall not under these general characters. France affords many wise and learned persons; and Italy not a few fools and idiots. Virtues and vices are strangely mixed in all people. War, commerce, and travel, with other human occurrences, alter mens natural dispositions, and give the lie to the exactest observations that can be made: Besides, time changes all things; and the qualities which this age remarks in the Italians, may in the next be transferred to the French; for there is no constancy in any thing under the moon.

Zeidi will find great examples of frugality among the Venetians, in the necessary expences of their persons and families; yet abundance of magnificence in whatever relates to the public, which the subjects of that commonwealth serve with open purses and free hearts.

Indeed they are not so remarkable for their temperance as some other parts of Italy: Libertinism and voluptuousness reign uncontrouled in Venice; women and wine are there almost as common as the elements; yet it is observed, that strangers generally debauch more with both than the natives. God preserve Zeidi from their temptations.

If it be his fortune or duty to visit Padua, he ought not to make too long an abode in that nest of philosophers and physicians, lest they first anatomise his soul, and discover the secrets of his commission, and then turn his body to a skeleton; as they once served a Moor, whom they dissected alive, to make experiment, perhaps, whether a Mahometan's blood circulated the same way as a Christian's.

Those Italian physicians are very cruel, and think it no sin to try poisons, and other fatal tricks on the poor, that so they may be the better able to keep the rich on the rack at their pleasure, and make their market of them.

I know not Zeidi's appointed station, or what cities he is to see; but wherever he goes, it will be necessary for him to use abundance of caution, for the Italians are the closest, slyest, and most judicious people in the world.

But I forget that he is chosen by the divan for this employment, to whom the characters of all nations are known, and who penetrate into the most interior recesses of mens spirits.

Therefore I lay my hand upon my mouth in profound submission, and acquiesce to my superiors; still praying, that the Grand Seignior may have faithful and wise ministers at home, and no novices for his agents abroad.

Paris, 3d of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1659.

XVI.—*To WILLIAM VOSPEL, a Recluse of Austria.*

THERE is a street in Paris, which they call the Street of Hell. The reason of this name is said to be, because at one end of it there formerly stood an old house possessed by devils, who were so troublesome, that, as the records of Paris affirm, an edict of parliament was passed to remove all the inhabitants out of their houses in that street, and shut up the entrance with a wall; since which, these demons were expelled by the Carthusians, who built a monastery in the place. If this story be true, it redounds much to the reputation of that order, and of all your monastics in general, who by your exorcisms are able to subdue the infernal spirits. But I have heard so many

filly tales of houses being haunted by ghosts and hobgoblins, that I know not how to give credit to this.

Besides, when I consider the nature of incorporeal beings, it seems ridiculous to think that they can take delight to play the antics, to frighten poor mortals, or confine themselves to an old ruined castle (for such was this house), for the sake of a little sport, when, according to the ancient philosophers, every incorporeal being is far more excellent than the most perfect body, and can be every where; neither are they at any time locally present in bodies, but only by propension or habit are inclined to them; and this they mean of living bodies. What charms then can there be in an old rotten fabric of stone and wood, to allure and detain immaterial substances?

Certainly the nature of these separate essences is very remote from all compounded beings. I have been often at a loss, in contemplating the soul of man. Sometimes it seems no otherwise distinguished from the souls of brutes, than by being united to a body of different organs, which causes us to show more evident tokens of reason than they, in the faculty of discourse, and in our actions. Yet when I consider more attentively the operations of our mind and intellect, I cannot but conclude there is a vast distinction between our souls and those of the beasts. I have with pleasure observed the excellency of human intellect in madmen and dreamers, who being come to themselves, (as we usually say) relate many things of which they were before ignorant, and comprehend things surpassing their former imaginations.

It appears therefore more rational to me, that the soul is every where and no where, as the ancients say, than that it is shut up and imprisoned in the body, as a wild beast in his den, or liquor in a glass. However, by an ineffa-

hle production of itself, it is present in every part of the body, as the light of the sun is diffused through the air, and can as soon withdraw itself, as that light, when interrupted by a cloud. In a word, I conceive the soul to be a very free agent, and that it is here and there and every where. It united itself to the body by its own choice, and can retire again from it at pleasure.

One closely pursued act of contemplation, will at any time carry thee or me to the invisibles, whenever we go resolutely about it.

Paris; 1st of the 4th Moon, of the Year 1659.

XVII.—*To the Venerable ISRAHIM, CARDINALSQUEER of Romeli.*

THERE has not a year escaped since my arrival at Paris, whersein I did not send to the ministers of the ever happy and exalted Porte constant intelligence of battles, sieges, storming of towns, and such other occurrences of war, as happened between the kingdoms of France and Spain; but now I believe my future dispatches must contain other matters; for in all appearance this war, which has lasted four-and-twenty years, is in a fair way to be ended. The King of Spain grows weary of his continual losses in Italy, Flanders, and Catalonia; and he of France seems glutted with perpetual victories and conquests. In a word, these two potent monarchs, laying aside their quarrels, are making diligent preparations this year for a campaign of friendship and love.

They are both in arms, yet commit no acts of hostility; whilst Cardinal Mazarini, on the part of this crown, and Don Louis d' Haro de Gusman, first minister of Spain, are gone to meet each other on the frontiers of

both kingdoms, as plenipotentiaries for their respective masters, to concert the measures of a lasting peace, and treat of a marriage between the King of France and the infanta of Spain.

All Europe is amazed at this surprizing change; and the French and Spaniards, who border on each other, can hardly believe their own senses, whilst they find a mutual commerce restored between their frontier towns and villages, which had been interrupted ever since the year 1635, about sixteen moons before I came to this city.

But though they are thus disposed to peace here in the West, the Northern monarchs are pushing the war forward in Sweden, Denmark, and Poland, with all imaginable vigour and animosity. The coming over of the Elector of Brandenburg to the Danish interest has made a great alteration in their affairs; for, whereas fortune seemed before in all things to favour the Swedes, now they lose ground, and find their attempts unsuccessful. Four thousand of their men fell before the walls of Copenhagen, in three nights and two days, which caused King Gustavus to raise the siege; whilst the Duke of Brandenburg retook Fredericks-Ode, and thereby restored to the King of Denmark the provinces of Holstein, Jutland, and Ditmarsen.

The Hollanders also have had a combat with the Swedes at sea, and sunk fourteen of their best ships, besides what they burnt and took.

These events have stirred up several princes to mediate a peace; and it is not improbable but in a little time we may see all the Christians good friends; and then it will be time for the muskians to be upon their guard.

As for Mahmut, he will not fail to pry into the counsels of these infidels, and send timely notice to the Porte,

leaving the rest to the wisdom of his superiors, and the pleasure of destiny.

Paris, 29th of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1659.

XVIII.—*To MUSU ABU'L YAHYAN, Alfaqui, Professor of Theology at Fez.*

THE character which the great and illustrious Abdel Melec Muli Omar, president of presidents, grace and ornament of ancient learning, oracle of Africa, and restorer of obsolete truth, has given me of thy profound wisdom and science, fills me with reverence and sacred love. I am ravished with wonder and joy to hear, that in this age, wherein the mussulman theology has suffered so many innovations, there yet survives a man who dares, and is able to assert against all opposers, not only the primitive and original truth, brought down from heaven by the hand of Gabriel, but also the real and indubitable sayings, sermons, counsels, and actions of the prophet, whilst he was on earth conversing with mortals, before his transmigration to the gardens of eternal repose and solitude. Thou art the Enoch, the Hermes Trismegistus of the age.

I have seen many copies of the Zune, or the Book of Doctrines, each pretending to comprise the whole system of that divine philosophy and wisdom which dropped from the lips of our incomparable and most holy lawgiver, and were attested by his wife, the holy Ageha, mother of the faithful, and by his ten disciples: Yet all these various transcripts differ both in their sense and manner of expressions.

I have perused the books intitled Dahif, or Imperfect, which contain the memoirs of his other wives, and the

manuscripts called maucof, or fragments, being only a collection of some select sentences, aphorisms and parables of the sent of God. But these have no other authority to back them, save the credit of some learned scribes, who were not familiar with the divine favourite, only living in his time, and taking things on report.

In fine, I have met with several parchments of Zaquini, or pretended traditions of Abu Becre, Omar, and Othman ; but these I esteem as spurious, corrupted, and full of errors.

What shall I say ? The zeal of Omar Eben Abd'il-Aziz, the ninth caliph of the tribe of Merwan, is not unknown to me ; I am no stranger to his singular piety, not to be matched among crowned heads ; for of him it is recorded, that as he descended from the throne at the time of his inauguration, he gave the robe from his back as an alms to a poor man ; and, that during his whole reign, he spent but two piafters a day on himself : And so great was his resignation to destiny (an admirable virtue in a sovereign emperor) that when he was on his bed in his last sickness, and was counselled to take physic, he answered, " No ; if I were sure to heal myself only by reaching my finger to my ear, I would not ; for the place to which I am going is full of health and blifs."

This caliph was a miracle of humility, and his charity always kept him poor : Moslema Eben Abd'il Melec relates, that going to visit Omar on his deathbed, he found him lying on a couch of palm leaves, with three or four skins instead of a pillow, his garments on, and a foul shirt underneath. Seeing this, Moslema was grieved, and turning to his sister Phatema, the empress, he said, " How comes it to pass that the great lord, commander of the faithful, appears in so squalid a condition ?"—She replied, " As thou livest, he has given away all that he

had, even to the very bed that was under him, to the poor, and only reserved what thou see'st, to cover his nakedness." Then Moslema could not refrain; but burst forth into tears, saying, "God show thee mercy upon mercy, thou royal saint; for thou hast pierced our hearts with the fear of his divine majesty." This caliph was numbered among the saints.

He it was, that perceiving the contradictions and disputes of the mussulmans, the darkness and confusion in the various copies of the Zunè, or book of doctrine, assembled a general divan of mollahs and learned men at Damascus, from all parts of the empire; commanding that all the manuscripts of the Zunè, which were extant, should be brought into this assembly, on pain of death to him that should detain one. This being done, he commanded six of them to be chosen out of the whole number by vote, men eminent for learning and piety, and that these six should severally collect out of all the multitude of copies, each man a book, containing what he thought to be the most genuine discourses of the prophet, concerning this world and that which is to come. When this was executed according to his will, he commanded all the old books to be burnt in a field near Damascus.

Yet after all the religious care of this holy caliph to restore these writings to their primitive integrity, the mussulmans soon fell into new contentions about the sense and interpretation of these correct copies of the Zunè; from whence sprang the four cardinal sects, on which all the innumerable, lesser, and latter divisions among true believers are founded.

I cannot therefore but inwardly rejoice, and from my heart highly applaud the method taken by those of your renowned college, to discern the true doctrines and sayings of the holy prophet, from those which are supposi-



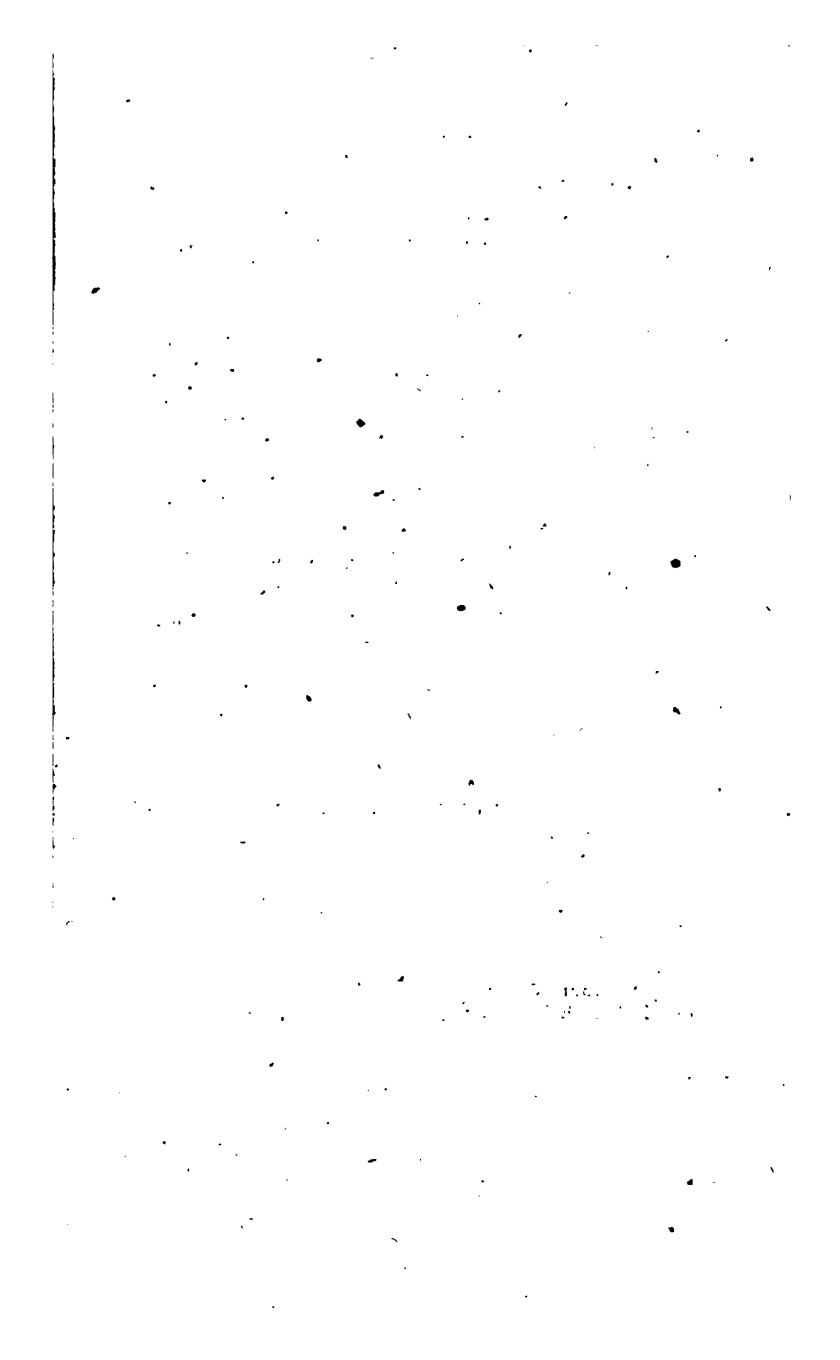
titious, by comparing all the books that are extant together, and reducing matters of divine revelation to the analogy of the Alcoran ; those of philosophy and moral regards to the standard of experience and reason ; for it is impious to believe, that the divine apostle would impose any thing on our faith, repugnant to the sense of men, or the express will of Heaven. By the soul of Pythagoras, Mahomet said nothing but what was rational and evident to any unprejudiced mind : But the greatest part of these sectaries are besotted ; they form to themselves false notions of God and his prophet, and think to merit paradise by their stupidity.

Regreard alfaqui, I have much more to say to thee, and many questions to ask ; but time and the Grand Signior's service force me to conclude abruptly, wishing thee perfection of bliss.

Paris, 29th of the 6th Moon, of the year 1659.

END OF VOLUME FIFTH.

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